POLICE · BUDGET · EDITION

EDITED · BY HAROLD FURNISS

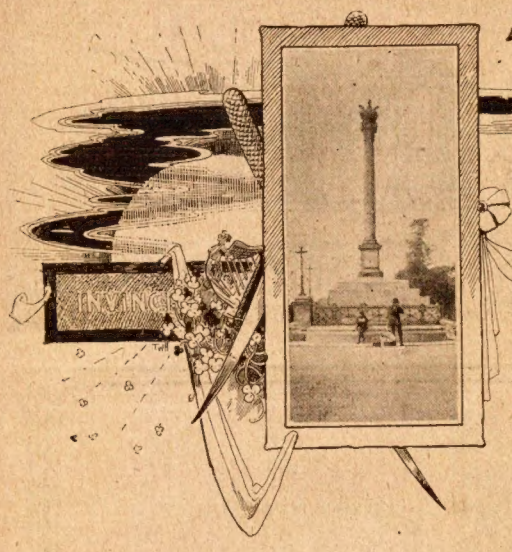
FAMOUS CRIMES

PAST AND PRESENT

ONE · PENNY

THE INVINCIBLES' ATTACK ON MR. FIELD.

Vol. IV. No. 41.



THE TRAGEDY OF PHŒNIX PARK.

How the INVINCIBLES attempted to make war on Great Britain and Murdered Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke.

"Come the three corners of the world in arms,
And we shall shock them. Naught shall make us rue,
If England to itself do rest but true."
—SHAKESPEARE, "King John," Act V., Sc. 7.

CHAPTER II.

AT the end of the last chapter we left the Secretary of State and his subordinate, Mr. Burke, lying on the ground in the Phœnix Park, Dublin, foully murdered by men who called themselves patriots—slain, the one because he attempted to protect his friend, the other because he was a faithful servant of the Crown.

The first news of the tragedy was brought by a young telegraphist, named McGuire, who, riding through the Park on his way from his daily work, noticed two bodies lying on the path near the Phœnix Monument. He immediately went off in search of a policeman, and told the constable that a couple of corpses were stretched in gore in the chief pleasure ground of the Irish capital. The policeman despatched a message to Steevens Hospital to say that a murder had been committed, and Dr. Myles, the house surgeon, set out at once for the scene of the outrage. He arrived in about half an hour, and found that Mr. Burke was dead, but that the second victim was still breathing, though it was obvious that life could not last for more than a few minutes. At that time only the person of the Under-Secretary was recognised. The young doctor saw that little could be done for the second victim, and he was right, for, after groaning several times, Lord Frederick Cavendish expired.

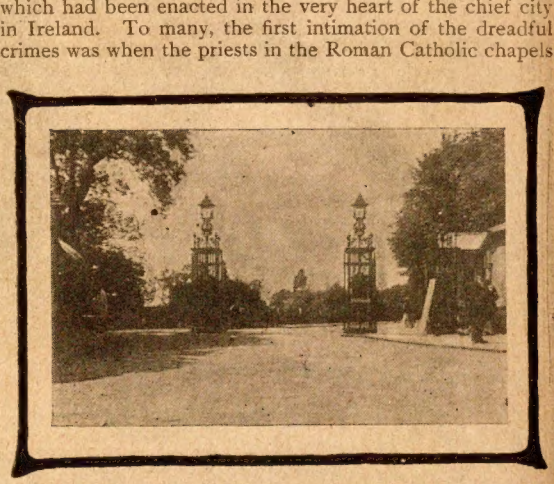
The bodies were immediately conveyed to Steeven's Hospital, where they lay till the following morning, when they were taken in two small hearses to the Chief Secretary's official residence.

For once the beautiful ballroom of this mansion was turned into a mortuary. Two large tables were placed there, and on them were placed the bodies of the unfortunate officials. How little Mr. Burke could have imagined, as he attended the brilliant balls of former Chief Secretaries, that the day would come when his lifeless corpse would be stretched in that gilded chamber for the purposes of being examined by the surgeons. How incongruous it seems that the scene of revelry and splendour should be converted into a charnel house!

The post-mortem, which took five hours to perform, was conducted by Mr. Porter, afterwards Sir George Porter, assisted by Messrs. Hamilton and Myles, while Dr. Tweedy took notes of the necropsy. The body of Mr. Burke showed ample evidence of great violence having been used, being stabbed in several places, the hands badly cut, the throat cut, but not so deeply as to account for death, the chest punctured in three places, with sufficient force to penetrate the bone, and, lastly, a deep stab in the neck which passed through the ribs and divided the heart. The clothes of the late Under-Secretary were badly slashed about, and were drenched with blood.

The clothes of Lord Frederick Cavendish were even more cut, there being seven rents in the coat alone. His injuries also were more severe. There was a deep transverse gash on the centre of the left fore-arm, cutting through the muscles right down to the bones, one of which was fractured, and a portion of it literally sliced away. The force used may therefore be judged. In the centre of the back of the neck the doctors found a deep stab, which missed the spinal cord, though it cut off a portion of one of the vertebræ, and finally, the point of the weapon came out just above the right collar-bone. A third wound was seen on the outer edge of the right collar-bone, and in the right armpit there was a deep gash, which, however, did not sever any of the great blood-vessels situated there. This injury was probably received while the poor man was attempting to defend himself, as was the slash in the arm. Lastly, there was a fearful wound, entering just above the right shoulder-blade, completely transfixing the shoulder, and dividing all the large arteries in that region. This was the fatal stab. Mr. Burke died from his heart being pierced, Lord Frederick from internal hemorrhage, due to the severing of the blood-vessels. The post-mortem ended, the remains were placed in coffins to await the inquest and subsequent interment.

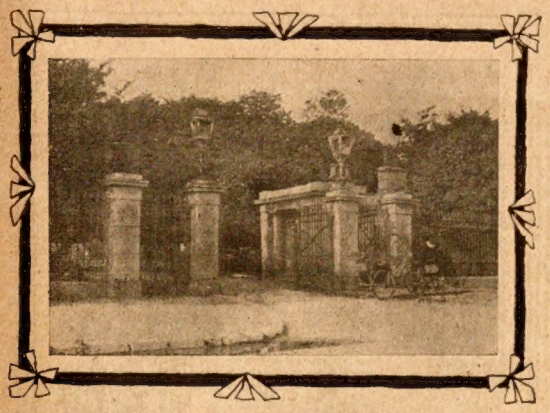
We have said that it was not till Sunday morning that the general public became aware of the awful tragedy which had been enacted in the very heart of the chief city in Ireland. To many, the first intimation of the dreadful crimes was when the priests in the Roman Catholic chapels



North Circular Road Gate.

at Mass asked for the prayers of the congregation for the repose of the soul of Mr. Burke, who was a staunch son of the Church of Rome. In one of these churches James Carey and Joe Brady, the actual murderers, were present, but justified their act to themselves by believing that in obeying the dictates of the secret committee they were serving

God and their country; indeed, Carey had the audacity to add sacrilege to his other crimes by actually receiving the Sacrament at the very service in which the death of the Under-Secretary was announced. In spite of the boasted sympathy



Chapelizod Gate.

which the Irish Republican Brotherhood, and their devil's spawn, the Invincibles, to this day declare they received from the Irish people, the fact remains that Dublin was plunged into mourning, private sorrows were forgotten in the grief for the national disgrace which such acts of brutality entailed, and the leaders of the political parties in Erin boldly denounced the crimes of the rebel minority.

An inquest was held on the two murdered officials, and a verdict of wilful murder against "some person or persons unknown" was returned. The unhappy secretaries were interred, and Dublin settled down a little. The police asserted that they had a clue, but it is very doubtful, and inasmuch as no progress was being made, the Castle officers published a reward, offering ten thousand pounds to anybody, not being the actual murderer, who would come forward with information which would lead to the conviction of the perpetrators of the outrage. This was signed by Earl Spencer, known by the nickname of "The Red Earl," and afterwards better known in Ireland as "Foxy Jack," and was posted side by side with a manifesto from Mr. Parnell, which aroused the ire of the Republican Party, and which deserves to be quoted in its entirety, if only as a proof that the respectable portion of the Irish people had no sympathy with the assassins, who cloaked their greed for money, gained by murder, under the term Patriotism. It read as follows:

"To the People of Ireland—

"On the eve of what seemed a bright future for our country, that evil destiny which has, apparently, pursued us for centuries has struck at our hopes another blow which cannot be exaggerated in its disastrous consequences. In this hour of sorrowful gloom we venture to give expression to our profoundest sympathy with the people of Ireland in the calamity which has befallen our cause through this horrible deed, and with those who determined at the last hour that a policy of conciliation should supply that of terrorism and national distrust. We earnestly hope that the attitude and action of the Irish people will show to the world that an assassination such as has startled us almost to the abandonment of hope of our country's future, is deeply and religiously abhorrent to their every feeling and instinct. We appeal to you to show by every manner of expression that, amid the universal feeling of horror which the assassination has excited, no people feel so deeply a detestation of its atrocity, or so deep a sympathy with those whose hearts must be seared by it, as the Nation upon whose prosperity and reviving hopes it may entail consequences more ruinous than those that have fallen to the lot of unhappy Ireland during the present generation. We feel that no act that has been ever perpetrated in our country during the exciting struggles of the past fifty years has so stained Ireland as this cowardly and unprovoked assassination of a friendly stranger, and that until the murderers of Cavendish and Burke are brought to justice that stain will sully our country's name.

"(Signed)

CHARLES S. PARNELL.
JOHN DILLON.
MICHAEL DAVITT."

The publication of this protest against the foul acts of the Invincibles was a terrible blow to the Secret Committee and for a time they were in a dilemma as to whether they should kill Parnell as a traitor to the cause or abandon their nefarious designs. They had counted on being regarded as heroes, and they found that instead they were looked upon as the worst enemies of their country by all except the extremely ignorant and a few fanatics who hoped for office when the power of Great Britain should be overthrown. Something, however, had to be done to justify the large sums of money which foolish subscribers were sending them. Accordingly, the declaration of Mr. Parnell was met by the following outrageous proclamation;

"'GOD SAVE IRELAND.'

"Dublin, May 8, 1882.

"To the Irish People and all Lovers of Liberty, and Particularly our Brothers of the I.R.B. and Kindred Organisations—

"As there seems to be a grave misunderstanding as to the aim and scope of the late executions at Dublin, we, the Executive of the I.R.B. hereby request all the aforesaid to withhold their opinion of this matter for the present, and to refrain from the expression of sym-

The milestone on the Tallaght Road.

pathy at public meetings, which tend to humiliate Ireland and to give aid and comfort to England.

"As to the monster, Burke, he has preyed upon the lives and liberties of his countrymen for many years, and has deserved death a thousand times at our hands;

and as to Lord Frederick Cavendish, the lineal descendant of the infamous Lord Broghill, who hanged the gallant and patriotic MacEgan, Bishop of Ross, at Carrigadrohig, because he would not betray his country, his very name stinks in the nostrils of the Irish people by the iniquities of his brother, Lord Hartington, and the wholesale evictions of his father, the Duke of Devonshire, thereby driving thousands of the rightful owners of the soil to the poor-house, exile, and death.

"This organisation has tolerated the vagaries of Mr. Parnell and his late treason-mongers until he has filled the bastiles in our country with the victims of a useless Parliamentary agitation, which left twenty thousand persons homeless last year, and drove millions of the flower of our people to exile. This ceases to be harmless when a truce is made by which he himself and his friends are allowed to go free, and eighty of Ireland's bravest sons are left to languish in prison to be exiled or assassinated, and these the men who by the so-called 'outrages,' opened the prison doors to Mr. Parnell and his friends.

"If England really wished to deal fairly by Ireland, why did she not issue a general amnesty, by which the prison doors would be opened, and thousands of our exiled brethren who now pine in foreign lands could return in safety and honour? Instead of this, Mr. Gladstone sent emissaries to the venerated head of the Catholic Church, who, by lies and false representations, have deprived thousands of our poor, persecuted people of the comforts of religion by turning our altars into political platforms. Let us ask the people of Ireland, are there no classes of the people to be considered except the farmers, and of what avail will it be to Ireland if a selfish class is firmly rooted in the soil and becomes thoroughly loyal to England?

"We ask our friends in America to ponder on our desperate circumstances, to think of a brave and honourable people driven to despair by witnessing the white bosoms of our women torn open by the bayonets of English mercenaries, and our children of tender age shot down in the highways, while our wails of anguish are stifled in our blood.

"We are convinced that no true prosperity can exist in Ireland so long as England possesses her custom houses, these allowing her manufactures to pass into Ireland duty free, thereby leaving our Irish mechanics unemployed, and the enormous war tribute exacted by England taking away the produce of the land, thereby forcing the Irish people to starve.

Patrick Delaney.

"Now, furthermore, we call upon all our brothers in America, particularly the advanced Nationalists, to aid, by every means within their power, the men who have carried out this execution, and we hereby further declare that they deserve well of their country.

"By Order of the Executive of the I.R.B."

Now, while the hoardings throughout the length and breadth of Ireland were being placarded with copies of these announcements, what had become of the actual murderers and their colleagues who took part in the tragedy of May 6th?

While Brady and his comrades were despatching Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke, Kavanagh was waiting quietly with the head of his little mare turned in the direction in which the flight was to be made. All the while he

Davy's, 111, Leeson Street, where the murderers had their parting glass before separating after the crime.

was flicking the animal with his whip to get her into a sufficient state of excitement so that she might start off at her top speed. "Skin the Goat," seeing that the assistance of his party was not required, retired from the Park by the North Circular Road.

The moment the murder was perpetrated, the four, Brady, Kelly, Caffrey, and Delaney, ran to the car and mounted. Just as Kavanagh was about to set off, Brady droped his revolver, and coolly got down to pick it up, being as careless concerning the dreadful deed which he had just committed as if he had only killed a rabbit. When the weapon was recovered, the party started on their circuitous flight. Kavanagh took the first turn to the left after leaving the scene of the outrage, and drove as fast as the mare could go along the road which crosses the Fifteen Acres. At the hill just beyond the Hibernian School the party was seen by a park ranger named Godden, who afterwards was able to recognise Brady and Caffrey. The vehicle passed out of the Chapelizod Gate, and round to the right, through the village of Chapelizod.

Then the murderers swung round to the left, so that they were passing along a road parallel to the one which they had just traversed. Looking across the fields, they were able to see that they were not being followed. Still Kavanagh plied the whip, almost running the game little mare off her legs, till the gang of assassins reached the Inchicore Road; thence they went through the township of Inchicore, and so on towards the Naas Road, getting farther and farther from Dublin. It was then getting dark, and no one was about. All this time the men had not exchanged a syllable, but when they saw that they were clear from pursuit, they found their tongues, and commenced to discuss the crime which they had committed.

Just past the Bluebell Mill they were passed by another car, whose driver subsequently told the police that the men were laughing and talking and joking, so that he thought they were a tipsy party out on the spree. Instead of going

into South Dublin from the Mill, Kavanagh turned into the Tallaght Road, and drove still farther into the country. At a milestone in this road a halt was called for a few minutes to enable Brady and Kelly to clean the blood from off their hands, and also to wipe the knives with which they had done their murderous work. As luck would have it, neither of these had a spot of gore on their clothes. Using the long, wet grass which grew around the milestone, they wiped their hands clean and performed their toilets. All trace of crime being then removed from their persons, they re-mounted the car and again started along the road, eventually turning off towards Terenure, and passing through the village of Crumlin. It was in this little village that Brady kicked out the brains of a dog that jumped up at the cart, barking the while.

Joe Mullet.

Terenure gained, Kelly descended at the terminus of the tram lines and went home by tram to the house of his mother. The speed of the car was now lessened, for the mare was getting dead beat, and the remaining four proceeded at a trot through Palmerston Park and Ranelagh to Leeson Park. There the flight ended, for the men had entered the city at the point diametrically opposite to that at which they had left it. The final halt was called at Davy's Tavern, No. 111, Leeson Street, where the party descended and went inside to drink their own healths and perdition to the British Government. Kavanagh took his mare home, and was so tired that he fell asleep in the stable without waiting to unharness the animal. Brady, Delaney, and Caffrey strolled casually to Westland Row, where they met Carey in the shadow of a chapel, and told him that all had prospered as they had desired it.

We now come to the steps which were taken to discover the perpetrators of these horrible crimes. It was fairly certain that the murderers had escaped from the scene of the tragedy on a car; indeed, comparing the time when the deed took place, as testified to by Earl Spencer and by the young officer who witnessed the dreadful tragedy, it was only by car that the ruffians could have got away before the telegraphist came up. The four thousand car-drivers in Dublin were therefore summoned before the police and asked to account for their movements on that evening. The only one who was unable to give a satisfactory history of his movements on May 6th was Kavanagh, but there was not sufficient evidence against him to justify his arrest. The Crimes Act was in force at that time, and Carey, Curley, Mullett, the two Hanlons, and McCaffrey were all arrested and lodged in Kilmainham Gaol. There they lingered till September, when, as no definite evidence was forthcoming against them, they were liberated. Six weary months elapsed from the date of the murders, but as far as the general public were aware the police seemed no nearer bringing the slayers of Burke and Cavendish to justice. Nonetheless, the detective department under the able management of Messrs. Curran and Mallon were steadily accumulating evidence which was destined eventually to lead the scoundrels who had slaughtered at the bidding of another to the scaffold. The Crimes Act, which was to be such a strong weapon in the hands of the Irish Magistracy, was a measure introduced by Mr. Gladstone to virtually suspend the Habeas Corpus Act for the time being and permit suspicion, for the public good, to be sufficient reason for imprisoning a man. Naturally it had to be used with the greatest caution, but its operation was left in the hands of men of known probity, and harsh as it may seem, much good and no harm resulted from its employment at this period.

It was a bye issue which brought about the beginning of the end. Certain evidence of a rather vague character had been in the possession of the police for some time, but not sufficient to warrant the active steps which they were anxious to take.

One Francis Hynes was indicted for murder, and the Crown objected to a large number of jurors, really because they were strongly suspected of being in sympathy with the Irish Republican Brotherhood. The rebels thought that it was because they were Roman Catholics. In the end, Hynes, who was tried before Mr. Justice Lawson, was found guilty and sentenced to death. The trial extended over two days, and the jury were locked up in the Imperial Hotel, in which hostelry was staying the redoubtable Mr. William O'Brien. The latter declares that some of the jurors got drunk and even went so far as to break into his room shortly after midnight and invite him to join their revels. Shocked, as well he might be, by such levity on the part of men who held the life of a fellow-creature in their hands, Mr. William O'Brien wrote a strong letter to the "Freeman," giving the facts of the case, rather minimising than exaggerating the circumstances. The editor of the paper published the letter with certain comments on it of his own, and was summoned to appear before Mr. Justice Lawson to answer for it.

The editor, Mr. Gray, High Sheriff for the City of Dublin, appeared and attempted to explain the circumstances under which he published the letter, and Mr. O'Brien was in court and tried to defend the journalist,

but to no purpose. Justice Lawson would not hear a word from Mr. Gray, and ordered Mr. O'Brien to be taken out of court. He then delivered judgment in rather a startling fashion, saying that the foreman of the jury, Mr. Field, had said that the jurors were not drunk, and he believed him,

so he could not listen to the citizen whom the Irish Capital had raised to the post of High Sheriff and member for the city. That being so he sent Mr. Gray to gaol for three months and fined him £500, besides requiring him to find

The corner of Hardwick Street, where Field, the juryman, was attacked.

securities to the extent of £10,000 for his future good behaviour.

This extremely high-handed method of administering justice exasperated the Republicans, and it was decided that both Lawson and Field should be taught a lesson.

The lower members of the Invincibles were still in communication with their secret leaders and corresponded with them through James Carey, who was in touch with "Invincible No. 1," the unscrupulous Tynan, of whom more later. Delaney was selected to punish Judge Lawson, but he had to wait some little time for his opportunity; however, it came in November. One Saturday evening, as the judge was walking towards the Kildare Club, the detectives who were detailed to protect him noticed a man passing and repassing their charge, and their suspicions were aroused. Once the man stopped Detective McDonnell and said: "It's all right; you know me." Just as Justice Lawson reached the club, the man crossed the road rapidly, and at that moment McDonnell spotted the butt of a revolver protruding from his breast pocket. He rushed across the road just as the mysterious individual had planted himself in front of the judge. In an instant McDonnell grappled with the would-be assassin, and, after a desperate struggle, got possession of the weapon which his captive made violent attempts to turn on him. Assistance arrived, and the man, who turned out to be Delaney, was conveyed to the police station. It was clear that he had several confederates, for an attempt was made by a band of men to stop the Donnybrook tramcar just at the time when Mr. Justice Lawson was to be shot, so as to create a disturbance, during which, it was hoped, Delaney could have escaped.

A few days later Brady, Kelly, Hanlon, and Dan Delaney set out to inflict condign chastisement on Mr. Field and also on another juror in the case of Hynes, named Barrett. Joseph Mullett gave the orders in this case, but there can be little doubt that he received them from Carey, who had them direct from the headquarters.

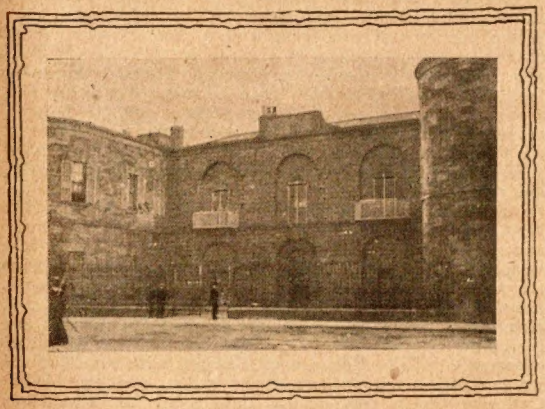
At the last moment it was decided to send another detachment of Invincibles to tackle Mr. Barrett, and the four mentioned were left to attend to Mr. Field. The plan of operations was as follows: Lawrence Hanlon and Tim Kelly went up Westmoreland Street in advance of, or close after Mr. Field; Brady and Dan Delaney had previously gone to the corner of Hardwicke Street on Kavanagh's car. Hanlon gave the signal when all was ready. At that moment a heavy hand was laid on Mr. Field's shoulder, and a voice hissed: "You villain!" He looked up, and saw a couple of men in front of him, and, turning, saw two more behind. Before he fully realised what was happening, he was stabbed twice in the back, and fell. He screamed "Murder!" several times, while his assailants made lunges at his heart. He strove to protect it with his left arm, which was transfixed with a knife or dagger. Two more wounds passed through his cheek and pierced his tongue. Then he feigned death, and the murderers ran off. After their departure, he staggered home, and sent for the police.

These men were not immediately arrested, but the police had one of the Delaneys (Patrick) in prison for attempting to kill Lawson, and from him certain facts bearing on the Phœnix Park Case were extracted. Then Mr. Curran, with the assistance of Mr. Mallon, set up a species of Star Chamber, where suspects were subject to rigid cross-examination, and given the chance of speaking or going to prison. No specific crime was necessary for the arrest of the persons, and the first to follow Pat Delaney was his brother Dan. For eleven hours he was under examination, and after him came Kelly, Caffrey, Brady, and James Mullett. These were not the only ones who were turned inside out in the private room of Mr. Curran at the Castle, for all manner of persons were suddenly brought before him, in the hopes that a chance word might enable the police to draw the net a little closer round the persons whom they were morally certain were responsible for the massacre of May 6, 1882.

A little time before this inquisition was opened, a couple of surgical knives and a valuable revolver were found in the house of James Carey, but there was not sufficient connection between him and the weapons to justify an arrest just then, but from hints dropped by Patrick Delaney, who was rewarded for his attempt on the judge with ten years' penal servitude, the police thought that they saw a way of implicating Carey, little thinking how very useful that astute scoundrel was to be to them at another stage of the proceedings. Carey and Kavanagh were haled before Curran, who did all he could to make them admit that they had something to do with the Invincibles, but both stood the examination well, and reluctantly the magistrate was forced to dismiss them. However, from the material gathered during December, 1882, in the room in the Castle the police felt justified in arresting more Invincibles and getting them to give their evidence by cross-examination, though when they had sucked the brains of these gentlemen dry, they discharged them, remarking casually that they really had nothing serious to tell them. Thus the whole of the party, with the exception of Pat Delaney, who was in gaol, had been examined and discharged, and accordingly felt secure from further molestation.

Thomas Caffrey.

Their feeling of security was enhanced by the bills which were posted everywhere offering a thousand pounds reward for the slightest hearsay evidence, as well as the huge sum, which had been increased to fifteen thousand pounds, for the actual conviction of the assassins, the



Kilmainham Prison.

police virtually admitting that they were at a standstill, both as to the murderers of the two Government officials and the assailants of Mr. Field. Feeling thus that they had baffled their hated foes, the Invincibles made no attempt to quit the country, and went about their ordinary avocations by day, while they plotted further murder by night.

But, for all that, they were not so safe. Mr. Curran, with his indefatigable ally, Mr. Mallon, was busy piecing the fragments which the pair had gathered from one and the other, until they had constructed a passable theory of the dismal tragedy, which they presented to Mr. Bolton, the Treasury Counsel. That worthy, who had been in touch with the investigators throughout the whole of this long and trying time, pointed out that although there was ample evidence to justify an arrest, there was really not sufficient to convict on the capital charge, but he also raised the hopes of his colleagues by reminding them that when a party of Irishmen are charged together it is generally easy enough to get some of them to turn Queen's evidence, and so secure the conviction of their fellows. That being so, a day or two was allowed to slip by, while the secret workers at the Castle determined who would be the best to accept as informers, so as to ensure condign punishment for the most culpable. That little matter being settled to the satisfaction of the police and Treasury, the details of the great coup were decided on.

The moment selected for the arrest of the Invincibles was shortly after midnight on the morning of the 13th of January, 1883.

It was considered unwise for any attempt to be made in the day time, inasmuch as the arrest of one would be rapidly spread throughout the town, and the others might escape. As it was, everything went off without a hitch. The Invincibles were not expecting arrest, and most of them were in bed. Search was made for weapons and documents, but the former were hidden too carefully, and the latter probably never existed, for a number of those who were taken into custody were ignorant, and the others were far too wise to put down anything incriminating on paper.

In all, twenty-six members of the nefarious association were seized in that raid, but of these only fifteen were of any importance. We gave their names in the first chapter. The remaining eleven were speedily set at liberty after those required as evidence were examined.

On the morning of the 13th of January the whole of the twenty-six were placed in the dock at the Inns of Quay Police Court, and formally charged with being concerned in the murder of Mr. Burke and Lord Frederick Cavendish. All pleaded "Not guilty," and after evidence of arrest had been given, they were remanded for a week, and it was arranged that their next appearance should be at the Kilmainham Courthouse, which adjoins the gaol, as it was feared that some attempt at rescue might be made if the Invincibles were brought through the streets again.

While this week of waiting was passing, eleven were set free, it being clearly demonstrated that they had no active knowledge of what was going on, and had been members of the Invincibles only to the extent of talking treason in pothouses. On the second appearance before the magistrates, only fifteen stood in the dock to answer the charges brought against them. They had been informed of the release of their comrades, and readily admitted that they could not understand why they had been arrested, inasmuch as none of the present party recognised any of them.

This was a dangerous time for those who were really to blame for the formation of the Invincibles, and who instigated the "suppression" of those whom they disliked. Common chivalry, one would think, would have led them to assist those whom they had practically compelled to commit murder; but no; the highly patriotic gentlemen who had received the money for their own luxuries had nothing more to do with the poor creatures whom they had led into trouble, but one by one slunk out of Ireland and made for America or the Continent, where they consoled themselves by speaking of those whom they had forced to lose their lives as "true sons of Erin," the while they fattened on their blood money. It is hard to help admiring these heroic "patriots," who, till their dying day, gloried in their "devotion to their country," incidentally forgetting to mention that their devotion was paid for with the lives of the poor people whom they misled and deserted at the first signal of danger. These true "patriots," from No. 1, Mr. Tynan, downwards, deserve to live in the pages of history as examples of the true nobility, which does not hesitate to profit at the risk and expense of others.

TO BE CONCLUDED

"The Finger of Providence."

MR. JUSTICE ALLAN PARK once tried a man at Oxford for stealing faggots. The eminent lawyer, Mr. Charles Phillips, defended the prisoner. The first witness was the prosecutor, who, amongst other things, swore positively to the identity of the stolen faggots. Mr. Justice Park, who had a great habit of talking aloud to himself, muttered, loud enough to be heard by the prisoner's counsel, "Faggots! faggots! faggots are as like as two peas!"

Mr. Phillips made a mental note of the words, and when addressing the jury for the defence, commented very strongly on the absurdity of any man being able to truthfully swear to the identity of faggots. He said, "Why, what is there in faggots, gentlemen? Faggots! faggots! faggots are as like as two peas!"

Justice Park, on hearing these words, suddenly called out, "Stop! Gentlemen of the Jury, you must acquit this prisoner! There is a visible interposition of Divine Providence here to save an innocent man from unmerited punishment. I think it right to mention to you, gentlemen, this extraordinary circumstance. When I heard the prosecutor swear so unhesitatingly to the identity of these faggots, there passed through my mind the very identical observation just made by my very learned and much-respected friend, Mr. Phillips. What he has just said at once occurred to me, 'Faggots! faggots! faggots are as like as two peas!' Gentlemen, I cannot but think that the finger of Providence has pointed out to us both the right view of this singular case. Your obvious duty is to acquit this unfortunate man at the bar."

The prosecuting counsel, Mr. Richards, son of the celebrated Judge Richards, had also overheard the judge's muttered thoughts, and, seeing Mr. Phillips's ruse, sprang to his feet in an excited manner, with the intention of remonstrating with this unusual interference with the jury, and of explaining and exposing the nature of the "interposition of Divine Providence." But the judge would not allow him to speak, stopping him with, "Now, my dear Mr. Richards, pray don't interfere with me! I know what you are going to say. You know your own poor, dear old father was a judge himself, and knew how to estimate these things."

Overpowered by his filial piety, Mr. Richards sat down, and heard, with a shake of his head, the foreman of the jury say, "Not guilty."

THE CAREER AND EXECUTION OF JACK RANN,

BETTER KNOWN AS

"Sixteen-string Jack."

"I was once, to say it in brief,
A highwayman, a robber chief
In the open light of day,
So much I am free to confess;
But all men, more or less,
Are robbers in their way."
—LONGFELLOW, "The Divine Tragedy."

ROMANCE has cast a halo of glory round several of the best-known highwaymen of a century and a half ago, and the names of Dick Turpin, Tom King, Claude Duval, and Sixteen-string Jack have been handed down to the youths of the last three generations as grand examples of courage, magnanimity, and honour. As a matter of fact, the four men named were the worst types of criminals, and we have already shown in No. 1, p. 40, of FAMOUS CRIMES, what Dick Turpin was, and how much he could be regarded as a model for the youths of the rising generation. Sixteen-string Jack was no better, and perhaps no worse, than the notorious Turpin, and we will now present our readers with an account of the life and extraordinary transactions of this notorious malefactor

Jack Rann was born at a village a few miles from Bath, of poor but respectable parents, who were not able to give him any kind of education. When he arrived at an age which warranted his parents in making some arrangements whereby he could add to the family income, he was provided with a donkey, and for some time obtained a comfortable living by selling goods about Bath and the adjacent villages, which he drove round on the animal referred to. On one occasion, as he was vending his wares in the city of Bath, a lady of distinction was so pleased with his manners and appearance that she suggested to him that he should enter her service. Rann eagerly accepted the offer, and was soon installed in his new place. He appears to have served his mistress faithfully and well, and became a great favourite, not only with her, but also with his fellow-servants.

But the tastes he acquired whilst in this employ, and the ideas he obtained there, made him pine for the pleasures of the great metropolis. So, leaving his situation, he journeyed to London and obtained a place in the stables of the well-known Brookes, in which he conducted himself so well that he obtained a most excellent character from his employers, and was entrusted with the care of a postchaise. After this he was an officer's servant for some time, and he still maintained his good reputation. By degrees he became known to people of position, and succeeded in obtaining a place as coachman to Lord Sandwich. Rann was now looked upon in the various taverns frequented by the servants of the artistocracy as somebody of importance. He was a fine, well-set-up young fellow, standing 5 feet 10 inches in height, weight about 12 stone, shoulders finely formed, a splendid chest, and a biceps muscle as big as a boilermaker's. He was peculiar, not to say eccentric, in his dress. He never would wear any but the finest and thinnest silk stockings, with very thin boots or shoes, and he invariably wore breeches with eight strings at each knee—hence his name of "Sixteen-string Jack."

At last he was detected in the act of pilfering some of his master's property, and though he was not prosecuted for the offence, he, of course, lost his character. Rann now degenerated into a professional pickpocket, and joined a gang of well-known thieves, consisting of three members—Jones, Clayton, and Colledge—the last named, who was a mere boy, being known by the appellation of "Eight-string Jack."

Not very long after becoming a member of this gang, Rann was arrested for robbing a gentleman of a watch and a sum of money, and was brought up at Bow Street, in June, of the year 1774, and charged with robbing John Devall, Esq., near the nine-mile stone on the Hounslow Road. It transpired from the evidence that Rann had been keeping company with a young woman named Roche, who had at one time been apprentice to a milliner, but had been led astray by an officer of the Guards, and had afterwards been leading a life of pleasure. From this she took to associating with highwaymen, and received from them the valuable effects which they took on the road, disposing of them to "fences" known only to herself, and whose acquaintance she had made whilst living under the protection of the officer before referred to. The watch of which Rann had despoiled Mr. Devall was traced to the woman Roche, who had given it to another young woman named Catherine Smith, and she, in turn, had offered it in pledge to a Mr. Hallam, a pawnbroker, who, suspecting that it was not honestly come by, caused the arrest of all parties concerned. Miss Roche was charged with receiving the watch knowing it to have been stolen, and the woman Catherine Smith deposed that on the day Mr. Devall was robbed Roche told her that "she expected Rann to bring her some money in the evening," that he came about ten o'clock at night, and, after he had departed, Roche admitted that she had received a watch and five guineas from him, which he told her he had taken from a gentleman on the highway; Smith also said that Roche had asked her to take the watch to Mr. Hallam's to pawn.

Sir John Fielding asked Rann what he had to say in his defence, on which the latter said, "I know no more of this matter than you do, nor half so much either." He appeared in court in an extravagant costume. He had a bouquet of flowers on his breast "almost as large as a broom," and his irons were tied up with blue ribbons.

Rann was tried at the sessions held at the Old Bailey in the month of July, 1774, and as he persisted in his denial of all knowledge of the affair, and as it could not be brought home to him, he was acquitted.

Three days after this, Rann made an appointment to take supper with another female of easy virtue, at her lodgings in Bow Street, but, being very much later than the time he had appointed, the girl retired for the night, thinking that her guest was not coming. Soon afterwards Rann arrived, and, being unable to gain admittance at the door, tried to get in through the first floor window, and had nearly succeeded in accomplishing his purpose when he was seen by the watchman, who promptly took him into custody for attempted burglary. He was brought up at Bow Street on the 27th of July, and called the girl as a witness on his behalf. She said that he could not have had any felonious intention, as he knew that he would have been welcome and have been readily admitted if she had not fallen asleep. On hearing this evidence, Sir John Fielding dismissed him with a caution, and advised him to forsake his dangerous profession and seek for some more honest means of support.

Rann was fond of fine feathers, and on the Sunday following his acquittal on the above charge he appeared at Bagnigge Wells, a well-known place—the Earl's Court of those days—situated in what is now Clerkenwell Road, dressed in a scarlet coat, tambour waistcoat, white silk stockings, laced hat, etc. He openly declared himself to be a highwayman, and, getting drunk, became quarrelsome, with the result that he had several scuffles with men whom he had insulted. In one of these affairs he lost a diamond ring from his finger, and on discovering his loss said it was only a hundred guineas gone, which could easily be replaced by one evening's work on the "Heath." He at last became so troublesome that some of the company who were in a public-house where he was making himself obnoxious agreed to turn him out of the place, but, on attempting to carry out their project, they met with such a stout resistance from the half-drunk highwayman that they were compelled to give up their task, and he was left to boast and swagger about for a short time longer, when a number of young fellows joined forces with the first aggressors, and attacking him with their combined numbers, overpowered him and threw him through the window into the road. Rann was not much injured by the treatment doled out to him, but he complained bitterly of those who could injure a gentleman of his character.

Rann was next arrested for debt. It appears that he had

cajoled a tailor into letting him have clothes to the value of fifty pounds, and, not being able to pay, the matter was put into the hands of the police. He was confined in the Marshalsea Prison, where he was visited by a great number of his disreputable associates and women of loose character, but after remaining there several weeks his friends paid his debt and he was liberated. Later on he appeared at Barnet Races in the most elegant sporting style, wearing a waistcoat of blue satin trimmed with silver. On this occasion he was followed about by a crowd of people, numbering several hundreds, who were eager to gratify their curiosity by staring at a man who had made himself so notorious, and who had been the topic of conversation throughout London for some time past. Rann seemed to be highly gratified at the notice and attention he attracted, and swaggered about the racecourse for hours, followed by the crowd, the numbers constantly increasing, till at last there were between three and four thousand people following him.

Entering a well-known tavern, Rann ordered dinner for

Threw him through the window.

himself and eight or nine of his associates whom he had picked up on the racecourse. The dinner was sumptuous, the wines of the very finest cru, and it was remarked that a small crystal decanter was placed beside Rann. It contained curaçao, a liqueur which was at that time almost unknown in England, and which, being only drunk by a few members of the aristocracy, was very expensive. When the dinner was finished, Rann walked out of the tavern, followed by his friends, and as he reached the door, a big, broad-shouldered man was just entering the tavern. Rann walked straight on, expecting, no doubt, that the newcomer would make way for a man of such importance. But he had reckoned without his host, as he received a push that sent him staggering amongst his friends, and nearly knocked him down. Then the fat was in the fire. Three of Rann's accomplices attacked the big man, but were floored in a twinkling, and Rann was about to join in the melée, having recovered from the momentary shock the newcomer's push had given him, when the landlord and his satellites interfered and prevented further trouble.

But Sixteen-string Jack was not satisfied by any means, and after standing outside the house for some time waiting for his insulter to come out, but becoming impatient at the latter's non-appearance, he asked two of his friends to come with him, and again entered the tavern. He quickly found the man he was looking for, and walking over to him, demanded an apology for behaving so rudely.

"Not a bit of it," replied the other; "I'm not going to apologise to you or to any other man in England."

"Well, then," said Rann, "I'll give you a good hiding."

"All right," was the rejoinder. "When will you start? But look here," he went on, as if suddenly remembering something, "why can't we settle this matter in a nice, proper sort of way? I'll meet you here at five o'clock in the morning; bring six friends with you, and I'll bring six, and we'll go into the fields and have it out properly; and there's my hand on it, and nobody ever accused Bill Darts of breaking his word," and the stranger held out his hand to Rann, who grasped it and said, "You can rely on me being here at five," and then quitted the place.

It was something of a staggerer to Rann and his two friends to hear the name of the man who was going to meet the highwayman in the morning in order to settle who was the better man in the good old-fashioned style.

And now it will be necessary to give our readers some particulars concerning this "Bill Darts." The events of which we are now writing took place in the year 1774, and on the 18th May, 1771, during Epsom Races, this Bill Darts fought Peter Corcoran, an Irish bruiser of vast pretensions, for the Championship of England. The match was for £100 aside, and was made by the notorious black-leg and bully, Captain O'Kelly, the lucky owner of Eclipse, who gave Darts £100 to lose the fight, which he accordingly did, and of course O'Kelly won his bets, having backed Corcoran to a large amount. Darts, having sold his reputation, was a lost man, and he never again figured as a principal in the Prize Ring, though for several years he appeared many times as a second, or assistant, in the ring.

This, then, was the man whom the notorious Jack Rann was going to fight, and it says much for the highwayman's pluck that he duly appeared at the trysting place, accompanied by six friends, and found the former Champion of England awaiting him.

Matters were quickly arranged, and the party of fourteen moved off together. A suitable spot was soon found—a field in the rear of some farm buildings—and here the pair stripped and set to work. Rann was no dunce at the fighting game, having had considerable practice both with and without boxing gloves. He was much younger than Darts, was quite as tall, though not so heavy, but far more lithe and active. A terrific battle followed, both hammering away in furious fashion. Rann paid attention to his opponent's face, whilst Darts hammered away at his rival's body. After fighting for nearly an hour, their friends interfered, and persuaded them to shake hands and be friends, advice which they gratefully, no doubt, accepted. Darts was all but blind, whilst from waist to armpit Rann was black and blue, but he afterwards maintained that he would have won the fight, as Darts would have been unable to see in a few minutes.

It would be impossible to recount all the adventures that Rann encountered during his short career as a highwayman. He robbed the rich and squandered his ill-gotten gains with his profligate accomplices and in the gambling hells of London. Occasionally, after having committed some robbery which created a stir in the neighbourhood of London, Rann would make a journey to some distant town, and stay there a few weeks till the hue and cry had blown over, in the meantime going out on the road and easing travellers, farmers, and others of their money and valuables. One of his favourite places was Devizes, in Wiltshire, and on one of his visits to that place he robbed the mail-coach on the Western Road of a large sum of money, and this caused such indignation in the district that a subscription was started to procure the capture and commitment of the robber. At this time Thomas Lawrence, the father of Sir Thomas Lawrence, one time president of the Royal Academy, and Principal Painter in Ordinary to His Majesty, kept the Black Bear at Devizes, and he was asked to subscribe to the fund. He refused, however, to have anything to do with it, but while the townspeople were passing resolutions and holding committee meetings, he raised a party of horsemen on his own account, and putting himself at their head, scoured the country so effectually that, while three other highwaymen were caught, Rann acted up to his name and made the best of his way back to London.

At this period the road was usually the last resource of the dissolute youth of all classes, of broken-down gamblers, of ruined tradesmen, of gentlemen undoubtedly well connected who were at their wits' end for funds, and it was the last fatal step in the downward career which was summarily ended at the gallows. Rann, as I have said, committed many robberies on the road, Kent and Essex being his favourite

hunting grounds, but London was his headquarters, and he lived there in great style, and in the "genteelest lodgings" that could be found. He committed numerous burglaries, but the highway was the scene of his chief exploits. He was also the terror of Hounslow Heath, and many travellers had reason to regret having become acquainted with Sixteen-string Jack.

On one occasion a noted huntsman had been sent by his master to Leadenhall Market to buy the finest fox he could find there, and to be careful with him, as there were to be many swells out next day at a meet, and sport must be a certainty. The huntsman rode to London, and having purchased the fox, strapped it so that it could not be injured, and placed it on its back in the roomy pocket of a large overcoat specially made for such purposes. Cantering home soon after midnight, he was stopped by Sixteen-string Jack, who seized his horse's head, with the words, "Your money or your life!" The man replied, "My money! Why, I'm only a servant! I haven't got any. And you wouldn't care to take my life, surely?" Presenting a pistol, Jack said, "Come, look sharp, young man." "Well," said the huntsman, "we won't fall out. I want my life; so I suppose as I've no money it must be money's worth. You'll find something quite as good in my pocket here. You can search for yourself." No sooner had he said this than Rann dived his right hand into the pocket containing the fox, whilst he held the pistol and reins with the other. Reynard immediately caught the intruding hand in his teeth, and gave it a terrible bite. Down dropped the pistol, and a yell of agony filled the air, and the huntsman finding himself free at once galloped off. Jack's hand was badly lacerated, and he was obliged to suspend his operations for several weeks.

Another time Jack was out on the Heath, waiting for a customer. The night was dark as pitch; no moon or stars were visible, and mist and wreathing vapours seemed to hang over the surface of the ground, on which the moaning night-breeze played a sad accompaniment to the highwayman's vigil. Soon the lights of a coach were seen in the distance, and Jack drew a pistol from his belt, tightened his rein, and spurred forward to meet the approaching vehicle. When he got within two hundred yards of the huge, lumbering machine, he stopped by the side of the road, and, when it came nearly abreast of him, ordered the driver to pull up, and thrusting his pistol into the window, pointed it at the breast of one of the two inside passengers. This happened to be a naval officer, who coolly turned the weapon aside—it flashed in the pan; the officer fired in return, his companion followed his example, and Rann rode off groaning, a bullet having smashed one of his ribs. He was laid up for six weeks, and the travellers whose business took them across Hounslow Heath were relieved for a time of the unwelcome attentions of Sixteen-string Jack.

When Rann had been on the road for about four years, he attended a public execution at Tyburn, and getting within the ring formed by the constables around the gallows, desired that he might be allowed to remain there, and added, "Perhaps I may be hanged myself some day, and it is therefore very proper that I should be a spectator on this occasion, and have a good view of the proceedings."

On the 26th of September, 1774, Rann and a companion of his, named William Collier, went on the Uxbridge Road for the purpose of easing someone of their valuables. They had not been long on the look out when a gentleman, the Rev. William Bell, chaplain to the Princess Amelia, rode up, and Jack immediately crossed the head of his horse, and presenting a pistol at him, demanded his money, saying, "Give it me, and take no notice, or I'll blow your brains out." On this the rev. gentleman gave him the munificent sum of one shilling and sixpence, which was all the money he had, and also a pinchbeck watch in a tortoiseshell case. On the same evening Rann sent the woman Eleanor Roche, whom we have before mentioned, to pledge the watch at the shop of Mr. Cordy, a pawnbroker in Oxford Road, who, suspecting that it had not been honestly come by, retained it and visited the maker, a Mr. Grignion, whose shop was in Russell Street, Covent Garden, and who informed him that he had made the watch for Mr. Bell. The police were thereupon communicated with, and Roche and a woman named Stewart, who was employed by her as a servant, were arrested. The police waited at the house until the arrival of Rann and Collier, and they were taken into custody. On the 5th of October John Rann, William Collier, Eleanor Roche, and Christian Stewart were brought up at Bow Street, and after hearing the evidence, they were committed for trial. Rann and Collier were charged with highway robbery, and Roche and Stewart with being accessories after the fact.

On being brought up for trial, Rann was dressed in a suit of pea-green cloth, his hat was bound with silver braid, and he wore a gorgeous ruffled shirt. The evidence of Mr. Bell was the same in substance as what we have already said concerning the robbery. He swore that Rann was the man who had presented the pistol at him, and to whom he had given the money and watch.

William Hills, a servant to the Princess Amelia, swore that he saw Rann, with whom he was well acquainted, ascend the hill at Acton about twenty minutes before the robbery was committed, and this circumstance perfectly agreed with Dr. Bell's assertion respecting the time that he was robbed. A witness named Clarke said that at the lodgings of the prisoner Roche on the night of the 26th of September he found two pairs of boots wet and dirty, which had evidently been worn that day; and an officer named Haliburton swore that he waited at Roche's lodgings till Rann and Collier came in, and then took them into custody.

All four prisoners were found guilty, and Rann was sentenced to death; Collier, who was recommended to mercy, through some favourable circumstances appearing in his behalf, was respited during the King's pleasure; Roche was sentenced to fourteen years' transportation, and her servant, Stewart, was acquitted.

Rann was so convinced that he would not be convicted that he had ordered a supper to be provided, to which he had invited his particular friends and acquaintances; but the result of the trial somewhat upset both him and his calculations, and the proposed entertainment did not take place; or if it did, the festive board was not graced by the presence of the notorious provider thereof. When Rann received his sentence, he tried to force a smile, but the attempt was a complete failure, and it was very clear that his mind was tortured with thoughts which showed their effect on his countenance.

After conviction, and whilst awaiting execution, his behaviour was for some time most improper, especially for one in his wretched position. On Sunday, the 27th of October, he had seven girls to dine with him, as, at the period of which we write, condemned prisoners were permitted to invite their friends as often as they chose. The party was a remarkably cheerful one, when we consider the circumstances under which it took place, and songs and laughter were heard far into the night, the condemned man being as boisterous as any of them. His conduct throughout was expressive of the greatest unconcern, and he did not seem to realise the awful gravity of his position. When, however, the warrant for his execution arrived, he evidently saw that there was no hope of a reprieve, and that his days on earth were numbered, and he began to prepare himself for death. He attended to the ministrations of the clergyman who came to visit him, and on the morning of his execution he received the sacrament in the prison chapel.

Wednesday, November the 30th, 1774, was the day fixed for the execution, and from early morning the roads to Tyburn were thronged with vehicles of every description, the occupants thereof all being anxious to see the last of the notorious Sixteen-string Jack. Of course all the people who at Barnet Races had followed him about were there with their friends, and his reputation having increased in the meantime, there were hundreds more on the road, all wending their way to Tyburn to see the notorious malefactor sent to his long account. A well-known job master had advertised that he would run three coaches to the execution, and he was besieged with applications from all classes for seats, but his reply was the same to everyone—that he would not let a single seat to his own father unless he was satisfied that he had been stopped on the highway by Sixteen-string Jack. The coaches were, however, all filled, and went down to the scene of the execution in great style.

The roads leading to Tyburn were more like the high road to Epsom on Derby Day than anything else that can be imagined, as all London seemed to have turned out to witness the hanging. There were drags with splendidly-appointed teams, skilfully tooled by accomplished and aristocratic whips; tradesmen's T carts, with knowing-looking trotters and pacers; pleasure vans, and costers' drags drawn by patient neddies. There were many private and many post-carriages, not a few with four horses and four postillions, though the ill-harnessed steeds and the bloused or velvet-jacketed riders would alike have attracted attention the reverse of complimentary between London and Epsom on the Derby Day. There were, too, thousands of pedestrians, and a good many equestrians, whilst as the day wore on, numbers of the people who lived near the roads leading to the famous execution ground followed in the track of the rest, their curiosity so far overcoming their thriftiness that they made up their minds to sacrifice half a day's labour in order to see the execution.

DOWN DROPPED THE PISTOL, AND A YELL OF AGONY FILLED THE AIR.

Rann was taken from Newgate on a cart in the usual way, and on his journey down to Tyburn was followed by an immense crowd of friends, sympathisers, and curiosity mongers. He bowed and smiled to his associates as he recognised them in the crowd, and exchanged greetings with everybody he met on the road. The multitude cheered him and told him to "keep a good heart," to "die game," and other similar injunctions. The procession to the fatal spot was composed of a body of mounted troops, and these were followed by a number of Bow Street runners, whilst close behind them came the cart in which were seated the executioner, Jack Rann, and two soldiers. On each side of the cart there was a double row of soldiers on foot, with fixed bayonets, it having been rumoured that an attempt at rescue would be made, but, as a matter of fact, there was not any attempt of the kind. It is estimated that there were fully thirty thousand people present when Rann arrived at the gallows and stepped out of the cart on to the platform which had been erected under it. As he appeared on the scaffold and came in full view of the immense concourse assembled, a mighty shout went up. There were cries of "Don't let them hang him!" from some of Rann's accomplices, and the military closed up more closely to the gallows, but there was no further sign of any attempt at rescue.

Rann looked round the sea of faces and then up at the beam from which the rope was suspended, and his face blanched as he grasped the awful nearness of the Angel of Death. The minister then commenced to recite the usual prayers, and Rann joined with fervent zeal in them.

His bravado had now all gone, and he evidently fully realised his awful situation. The encouraging cries of his associates to "Die game" increased in volume, and when the executioner stepped up to him and adjusted the rope round his neck, he smiled a sickly smile and raised his voice higher in response to the minister.

Suddenly there was a death-like stillness, and the voices of the multitude were hushed as if by magic. The next instant the body of the highwayman hung suspended by the neck. There was a convulsive struggle, a twitching of the arms and legs for a few seconds, whilst the females who were nearest to the gallows shrieked in their excitement and sympathy. But in a few moments all was over, and Jack Rann was no more. The crowd slowly dispersed, and, after hanging an hour, the body was cut down and handed over to some friends who came forward, made application for it, and who duly interred it.

He Utilised His Confusion.

A BILL was once brought in by Mr. Antony Ashley Cooper (afterwards Earl of Shaftesbury) when he represented Poole in Parliament, for granting counsel to prisoners in cases of high treason. He regarded this as a most important matter, and had prepared an elaborate speech in support of the Bill, but when he stood up to deliver it in the House of Commons he was so intimidated that he lost his memory and was utterly unable to remember a single word of his oration. After giving him some moments to recover from his confusion, the House called for him to proceed, whereupon he spoke as follows: "If I, sir," addressing the Speaker, "who rise only to give an opinion on the Bill now depending, am so confused and confounded that I am unable to express the least of what I proposed to say, what must be the condition of that man who, without any assistance, is pleading for his life, and is in apprehension of being deprived of it?"

DAN DAWSON, THE HORSE-POISONER.

THE mysterious deaths of noted race-horses, on the eve of great races, spread consternation among Turfites—The crime traced home through betrayal of a pal—Sensational disclosures expected but never made—The culprit dies game and makes no sign.

"Give me my horse, ye rogues! Give me my horse!"
—SHAKESPEARE, "King Henry IV.," Act II., Sc. 2.

NEWMARKET has been the scene of many strange events in the course of its long history, but seldom, if ever, has it been thrown into such a state of extraordinary excitement as it was on the morning of the first day of the Spring Meeting of 1809, for like wildfire the news had run through the town that three valuable race-horses, which had been placed under the care of Mr. John Stevens, a highly respectable "stable keeper," had been found dead in their boxes under circumstances which pointed beyond doubt to foul play. The rumour proved to be only too true, and further investigation revealed the fact that the water in the trough from which the horses had drunk had been poisoned, for upon being submitted to a chemist for analysis, traces of a strong dose of arsenic were discovered. Great indignation, of course, was expressed at this diabolical and cowardly act, and Mr. Stevens immediately offered one hundred guineas reward for any information which would lead to the apprehension of the scoundrels who had perpetrated the dastardly outrage. During the whole of the meeting this tragic affair was naturally the chief topic of conversation.

Horse poisoning, indeed, was not an unknown offence in the annals of the turf. In the notorious Escape scandal, Sam Chifney accused Casborne, the Prince of Wales's trainer, of having administered an opium ball to Escape, and there was no doubt at all that Lord Darlington's horse Rubens had been "doctored" the night before the race for the Pavilion Stakes at Brighton in 1808, when he was a hot favourite at 5 to 2. The dose, however, had not been quite strong enough, and Rubens recovered in time to win the race, to the confusion of the scoundrels who had plotted against him. But in all previous cases it was the temporary disablement, not the death of the animal, that was aimed at. Now, however, it appeared that there were villains among the hangers-on of the Turf who would not scruple even to destroy a horse outright if his possible success in a race threatened their interests or seriously affected their betting-books.

Days passed, weeks, months, and still no clue was obtained to the guilty parties. By-and-by the "Newmarket poisoning case" dropped out of the recollection of sportsmen, and was consigned to the limbo of unsolved mysteries.

Two years elapsed The Newmarket Spring Meeting of 1811 had just commenced, when the whole place was again thrown into a state of painful excitement and consternation by the news that on the previous night four valuable horses in the stables of a well-known trainer, Mr. Richard Prince, had been found dead, and two or three more almost at the point of death. Two of the former, Dandy and Pirouette, were the property of Lord Foley, one of the foremost Turfites and heaviest plungers of his day; one, the Eagle, belonged to Sir Francis Standish, and the fourth, Spaniard, belonged to Lord George Cavendish. Reveller and Cœlebs, also owned by Sir Francis Standish, were seriously ill, but recovered, though their chances of winning the races for which they were entered were, of course, ruined. This mysterious and abominable crime threw a gloom over the whole meeting, and created a sensation quite unparalleled up to that time in the history of the Turf. The indignation was intense. The Jockey Club held a special sitting, and unanimously voted a reward of five hundred guineas for information which would lead to the discovery of the person or persons who had committed this atrocious crime.

Suspicion naturally fell upon the employees in Mr. Prince's stables, for the water-troughs containing the poisoned water, which was ascertained to be the cause of death, were kept with the lids or covers locked, and as the padlocks had not been apparently tampered with, it could only be conjectured that the poison must have been placed there by someone who had access to the troughs when they were unlocked at watering time. But though the strictest inquiry was made, nothing transpired to connect any of the stable-helps with the crime. It was, however, ascertained that the water in the trough on the Heath, from which the horses also drank, was poisoned. The case was placed in the hands of two of the cleverest Bow Street runners of the day, John Leadbitter and George Ruthven; but, smart and accomplished detectives though they were, they had to admit that for once their sagacity and skill were at fault, and that they could find no clue whatever to the perpetrators of the outrage. That the crime had been committed in the interests of some persons who were heavy bettors, and who, therefore, profited largely by the removal of these horses, there could be little doubt, but beyond that all was pure conjecture of the vaguest kind. Still, it was absolutely necessary, in the interests of the Turf, that owners of horses should be protected against such detestable villains—that the law should lay its hand upon them and make such an example of them as would deter others from imitating their malpractices. The Bow Street runners, therefore, were instructed not to slacken their efforts, but to apply all their zeal and energy and intelligence to the unearthing of these audacious and dangerous scoundrels.

Three months passed, and still the Jockey Club's 500 guineas, supplemented though it was by two hundred from Mr. Prince, and a hundred from Mr. Stevens, remained unclaimed The Bow Street officers came to the conclusion that there could only be one in it, for otherwise the magnitude of the reward would have tempted one of the confederates to turn King's evidence. Most persons had given up as hopeless the prospect of capturing the guilty parties, when suddenly the announcement came that Leadbitter and Ruthven had made an arrest.

"Who is he?" was the question eagerly asked. But when the answer returned was "Daniel Dawson," everyone who knew anything about Newmarket scouted the idea with scorn and declared that the police must be the victims of a hoax. For Daniel Dawson was one of the best known and most popular characters in the Capital of the Turf. It is true his calling was that of a professional horse-watcher, who supplied his employers with information about the various horses in training. Nevertheless, he was believed to be a thoroughly honest tout. Everyone who had engaged his services had found him always straightforward and true. No one had expressed more abhorrence of the outrages than he, and he had given Leadbitter and Ruthven energetic assistance in endeavouring to discover the culprits. His manners and appearance were certainly not of a nature to suggest suspicion. A quiet, rosy-faced, little man, with a countenance as open as the day, a jolly companion over a sociable pipe and glass, who could sing a good song, who had never been known to say a bad word against anyone, and against whom no one had a bad word to say. Such was worthy Dan Dawson, and that such a good fellow could be associated with such hideous and fiendish outrages was regarded as simply preposterous by his Newmarket cronies.

But whilst sportsmen were puzzling their brains over the meaning of this ridiculous step on the part of the police officers, there came the news that another arrest had been made. The second suspect was one Cecil Bishop, of whom no one knew much, and the little that was known of him was not to his credit. It was remembered, however, that he had been a loafer at Newmarket, and that Dawson had certainly been seen in his company.

Dawson had been taken at Brighton, the other man in London, and both were brought up before Mr. Conant, the sitting magistrate at Marlborough Street, who, after hearing the evidence adduced by the police officers, committed both the accused to Cambridge Gaol, to take their trial for the

offence charged against them at the next assizes. But, for reasons which have never been satisfactorily explained, the proceedings were postponed for nine months, and it was not until May, 1812, that Dawson was put upon his trial. In the interval Bishop had turned King's evidence, and, indeed, it afterwards came out that it was he who had set the officers on the track of his pal. When the case came on before Mr. Justice Le Blanc, some extraordinary and startling disclosures were made by Cecil Bishop. He swore that Dawson had confessed to him that it was he who poisoned Lord Darlington's horse Rubens in 1808. He admitted that he had subsequently become Dawson's tool and confederate. Acting under Dawson's instructions he had gone to Newmarket, and with a crooked syringe introduced a solution of arsenic into Mr. Prince's trough at the Ditch, and the Court listened spell-bound with horror as the wretch described how he watched from his hiding-place till he saw the horses drink, and then hurried off to Dawson to tell him of the success of the plot, in order that Dan might give prompt notice to the betting-men who had hired him to do the foul deed. No one after hearing the evidence could doubt Dawson's guilt—not even those who had known and liked him best. It was clear now that the man had all along been a consummate hypocrite, who had deceived everyone. Nevertheless, on a legal objection raised by the prisoner's counsel, the learned judge decided that as the indictment charged Dawson with having been a principal in the killing of the horses, and the evidence only showed him to have been an accessory, the jury must acquit him. And acquitted Dan accordingly was.

FOUR VALUABLE HORSES HAD BEEN FOUND DEAD.

But his acquittal did not do him much good, for the judge committed him at once to gaol again on a charge of poisoning two brood mares and a hack belonging respectively to a Mr. Northey and a Mr. Adams, of Royston, together with a horse of Lord Foley's, all under the care of Mr. John Stevens, at Newmarket. This time the indictment was framed under the statute 9 George I., c. 22, commonly called the "Black Act," which declares that anyone who, on any high road, open heath, common, or down, shall unlawfully and maliciously kill, wound, or maim any cattle, or shall procure another to join him in "such unlawful acts, such person shall, on conviction, be adjudged guilty of felony, and suffer death without benefit of clergy."

The second trial took place in July, 1812, before Mr. Justice Grose, and several fresh witnesses gave evidence against Dawson. Of these the most important was Mrs. Tillbrook, in whose house at Newmarket Dawson had lodged. This good lady, it appeared, had believed in Dan's innocence until the revelations made in the first trial, then her faith was shaken, and on taxing her memory she was able to recall some incidents which bore very strongly against the prisoner. She swore to having found a bottle of liquid concealed under Dawson's bed previously to the poisoning of the horses. She also swore that Dan was out late on the Saturday and Sunday evenings immediately preceding the Monday on which the crime was committed. After Dawson had left the house, she found the bottle which had contained the liquid empty, and the bottle on being analysed by the chemist was proved to have contained poison. Moreover, Mrs. Tillbrook swore that Dawson had cautioned her that he had poison in the bottle for the purpose of killing some dogs that had the mange, and bade her beware lest anyone in the house should, out of curiosity, taste the liquid. Thus was the chain of evidence made more damning and conclusive. Then Bishop told over again the story of his connection with the prisoner—how the latter at first only wanted him (Bishop) to administer doses sufficient to sicken the horses, how the poison in one or two cases was not mixed strong enough to produce the effect required, how Dawson then insisted on a more deadly and effective poison being used, and how, on Bishop's remonstrating and saying that if the dose were made so potent the horse would certainly be killed, Dawson replied:

"I don't care a damn; all Newmarket sportsmen are rogues, and if I had a fortune to spend they'd plunder me of it."

The conduct of the prisoner whilst this evidence was being piled up against him was extraordinary. He alternately swore at the witnesses in a way that curdled the blood of those who heard him, and chaffed them with a coarse levity which was even more shocking to those in court. The reckless, defiant way in which the man threw off the mask of hypocrisy he had worn so long amazed and appalled his old friends. When called upon for his defence he simply denied his guilt. But his counsel, Mr. King, did his best again to get his client off on a legal objection. He argued, first, that the subject was a matter of trespass, and that the indictment

must fail, as it was necessary to prove that the prisoner had malice against the owner of the horse to impoverish and injure him, and not against the animal only. In the next place, he contended that the prisoner's object was not to kill, but to temporarily injure. The judge, however, overruled all these objections, the jury found the prisoner guilty, and Mr. Justice Grove, after commenting in stern and strong language on the enormity of the crime, and bidding the prisoner entertain no hope of mercy, sentenced him to death.

The public generally had little compassion for the hardened wretch; but Dan had powerful friends who worked assiduously to procure a commutation of his sentence, and, strange to say, Lord Foley and Lord George Cavendish, who had both been sufferers by Dawson's crimes, were amongst those who most strenuously urged the appeal on his behalf. Dan, however, had other strings to his bow. He was allowed to see his wife, and one day the unusual emotion displayed by both of them at parting roused the suspicions of the gaoler, who, as Mrs. Dawson was leaving the cell, grasped her hand, forced it open, and found in the palm the following letter:

Grasped her hand and forced it open.

"DEAR WIFE,—I learn by yours I am in danger; by that I have another way to escape without fear of being discovered. You go to a tool-shop and get a small hack saw, as the watchmakers use, the smaller the better, to convey to me. The best way you can get it in will be between some turf, with some black thread; if you can, find a better way to do it; but be careful, for all the danger is to get that to me, for I have but one bar to cut and I am in town by four o'clock in the morning. They will not miss me till eight, when they come to unlock us. I shall be by that time out of their reach. Dear girl, bring me the turf six pieces at a time. When I have got the saw, I must have some friend come round to see the Castle, but take no notice of me, but see to the situation—I am in full north—and come again in one hour after we lock up; bring rope enough to reach over the wall, and he stand on the other side and hold it till I am up the wall. Fasten a large spike to the end of the rope and throw it over the wall, and tie knots about nine inches asunder to hold on by, and about twenty-five feet long. There is no danger in this, for there is nobody inside after we come to bed. A rainy night is best, and I will let you know the night by another line. Mr. Prince says he has got a very respectable man who will come forward and swear to everything of the concern, all but seeing it put in. If anybody can be found to write to Lord F. O. (alluding to a threat) it will have great effect. Mr. J. B., South Street, Grosvenor Square; Mr. B., King's Mews, Elbs (meaning Theobald's) Road, Gray's Inn Lane, have a good look out if there is any danger. I shall soon be along with you, with a little of your assistance; by applying to the people above mentioned you will get good intelligence. When you write, direct to Mrs. Howell's sister. When you come ask me for my pocketbook, and I can give you all at once. I shall call them things breeches and coat, so you will know."

On finding his plot to escape thwarted, Dawson threatened to commit suicide, but, according to the "Newgate Calendar," was "dissuaded" from that rash act by the chaplain. The same authority informs us that Dan made a most pious and edifying end, which it commends to the imitation of "that useless, and, we fear, vicious race of men denominated the sporting world, to which this malefactor belonged." The 8th of August, 1812, was the day on which Dan Dawson was condemned to die. It was expected—perhaps we may even go so far as to say it was hoped—that the convict would before his execution give some clue to the villains for whose benefit he had committed these crimes. The sporting world waited in trepidation and excitement to hear the condemned man denounce his tempters by name. But Dan was true to his word. He had promised never to split, and he kept his promise. He did, indeed, make a full and unsolicited confession of his own guilt, solemnly declaring that he never meant to kill the horses, but only to prevent them from winning. On his way to the scaffold he caught sight of Will Arnull, the jockey, and some of his former pals, whereupon he cried gaily, "Good-bye! God bless you, my Newmarket lads. You see I can't shake hands with you. Good-bye!" An immense crowd assembled to see him die, and his last words before the fatal bolt was drawn were, "My lads, I'm going straight to heaven from the drop. Don't you envy me?"

So Daniel Dawson, the horse-poisoner, died, and "made no sign" by which the world could identify the far worse villains who profited by his evil deeds.

An Abandoned Habit.

HENRY ERSKINE, the eminent Scottish advocate who succeeded Dundas as Lord Advocate, was offered by the latter the loan of his embroidered official gown, as he would have no further use for it. "No," said Erskine, in the same jocose spirit, "I will not assume the abandoned habits of my predecessor."

Killed by a Somnambulist.

IN July of the year 1869, Rufus Choate, the eminent American lawyer, was briefed for the defence of a man named Edward Tirrell, who was about to be tried for the murder of his mistress, the defence being, as Choate was instructed, that the act was committed while he, prisoner, was in a fit of somnambulism.

The evidence proved that Tirrell, who was a married man, was seen in the house of the deceased at nine o'clock in the evening. There was not any evidence as to the time of his leaving, but next morning, about four o'clock, someone in the house was awakened by a heavy noise, as of somebody falling, and about half an hour afterwards some person was heard to leave the house. A moaning was also heard, and shortly after a cry of "Fire!" from one of the inmates. The firemen entered, extinguished the fire, and then found the deceased lying with her throat cut, and a razor and blood on the bed. Part of Tirrell's wearing apparel was found in the room. About five o'clock the same morning, Tirrell called at a livery stable, said he wanted a carriage at once, as he had got into trouble, and that somebody had come into his room, and tried to murder him. He had a wild appearance, and seemed under the influence either of drink or strong excitement.

The prejudice against Tirrell was very strong; but there being indisputable evidence that he had been subject to fits of somnambulism all his life, and also that he had acted violently during these fits, Choate was able to make a powerful defence. He concluded a telling speech to the jury as follows: "Under the iron law of old Rome it was the custom to bestow a civic wreath on him who saved the life of a citizen. Do your duty this day, gentlemen, and you, too, may deserve the civic crown."

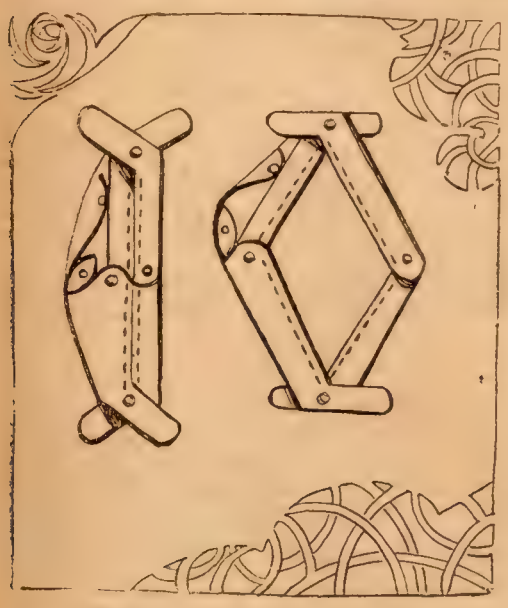
After two hours' deliberation, the jury returned a verdict of "Not Guilty." It transpired from facts subsequently discovered that the verdict was a just and proper one.

THE WAYS OF THE CRIMINAL

XXVI.—MORE DEVICES OF GAMBLING SHARPS.

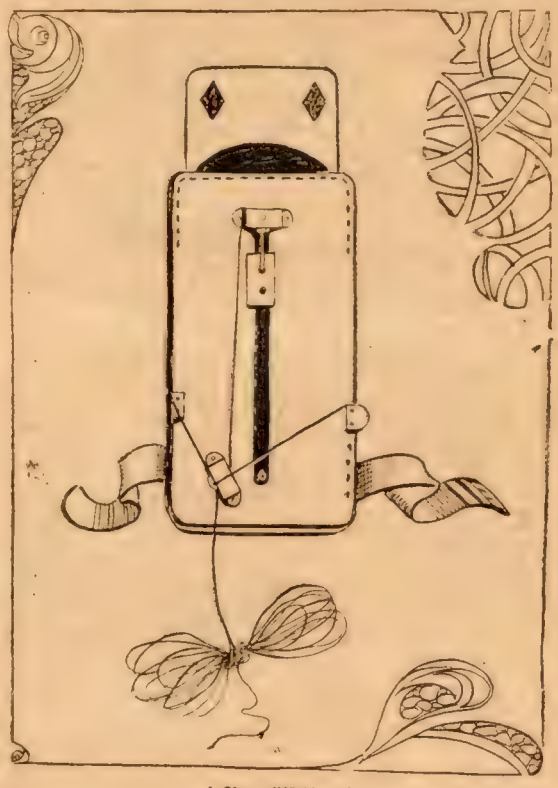
THE man Keplinger, whom we mentioned in our last chapter, is stated to have invented the finest "hold-out" the world has ever known. According to Maskelyne, in his "Sharps and Flats," the machine in its latest form is certainly a masterpiece.

"Keplinger was a professional gambler. In other words, he was a sharp—and of the sharpest." He it was who invented the king of "hold-outs." The date and place of the achievement is "wropt in mistry," but the story goes that "In the year of grace, 1888, Keplinger, the inventor, gambler, and cheat, was resident and pursuing his daily avocations in San Francisco." In this particular year he found "forgeries" were rather shy, and as money had to be made somehow or other, it became a case of dog eating dog. He turned his attention to his fellow-sharps. "In 1888, then, Keplinger's relaxation for some months," so the story goes, "consisted of a 'hard game,' with players who were all professional sharps like himself. The circle was composed entirely of men who thought they knew the ropes as well as he did. In that, however, they were considerably in error. He was acquainted with a trick worth any two which they could have mentioned. However much the fortunes of others might vary, Keplinger never sustained a loss. On the contrary, he always won. The hands he held were enough to turn any gambler green with envy, and yet no one could detect him in cheating. His companions were, of course, all perfectly familiar with the appliances of their craft. 'Hold-outs' in a game of that description would have been, one would think, useless encumbrances. The players were all too well acquainted with the signs and tokens accompanying such devices, and Keplinger gave no sign of the employment of anything of the kind. He sat like a statue at the table, he kept his cards right away from him, he did not move a muscle as far as could be seen; his opponents could look up his sleeve almost to the elbow, and yet he won! This being the condition of affairs, it was one which could not by any stretch of courtesy be considered satisfactory to anyone but Keplinger himself. Having borne with the untoward circumstances as long as their curiosity and cupidity would allow them, his associates at length resolved upon concerted action. Arranging their plan of attack, they arrived once again at the rendezvous, and commenced the game as usual. Then, suddenly, and without a moment's warning, Keplinger was seized, gagged, and held hard and fast. Then the investigation commenced. The great master cheat was searched, and upon him was found the most ingenious 'hold-out' ever devised. What did the conspirators do then? Did they lay into him with cudgels, or get the drop on him with six-shooters? Did they, for instance, hand him over to the police? No! ten thousand times no! They did none of these things, nor had they ever any intention of doing anything of the kind. Being only human, and sharps, they did what they considered would serve their interests best. A compact was entered into, whereby Keplinger agreed to make a similar instrument to the one he was wearing for each of his captors, and once again the temporary and short-lived discord gave way to harmony and content."



Closed. Open.

Seam Clips.



A Sleeve "Hold-out."

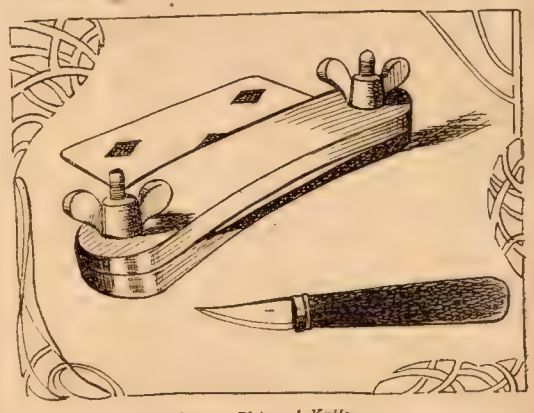
Keplinger's hold-out was an exceedingly clever piece of machinery. Had the inventor used more discretion, and instead of always winning had lost sometimes, it is likely that it would never have been detected. It is "a complexity of strings, wheels, joints, tubes, pulleys, and working parts generally." Nothing is unnecessary. "Every detail of the apparatus is necessary to secure its efficiency." The hold-out itself is similar to those we have already described, except that it is more complex, is longer, and that the slide which reaches out to receive the cards is longer and has a greater range of movement. "The machine is worn with a special shirt, having a double sleeve and a false cuff. The latter is to obviate the necessity of having 'a clean boiled shirt,' and the consequent trouble of fixing the machine to it more frequently than is necessary."

The base plates of the Keplinger machine have serrated edges, which enables the hold-out to be fixed in position. Other machines are supplied with holes which allow of their being sewn to the vest or shirt. Small slits are made in the wristband of the inner sleeve, and into this the points already referred to are carefully inserted. A few stitches alone are necessary to keep the instrument in its place and prevent it from slipping. In the lower edges of the false cuff slits are

A Cuff "Hold-out"

cut in a similar manner, and into this the points of the cover (the part of the machine which protects the slide) are pushed. "The cuff is held securely to the cover by means of little strings, which are tied to holes provided for the purpose in the sides of the cover. The operator having put on the machine, takes a shirt stud with a rather long stem and links the inner sleeve round his wrist. Then he fastens the false cuff to the inner sleeve by buttoning the two lower stud holes over the stud already at his wrist. Thus the inner sleeve and the cuff are held in close contact by the base plate and cover of the machine. Finally, he fastens the outer sleeve over the whole by buttoning it over the long stud which already holds the inner sleeve and the cuff. Thus the machine is concealed between the two sleeves. If one were able to look inside the operator's cuff whilst the machine is in action, it would appear as though the wristband and cuff came apart, and the cards were protruded through the opening.

"From the hold-out the cord which works the slide is led to the elbow joint, where it passes around a pulley. This joint, like all the others, allows of movement in any direction. From the elbow to the shoulder the cord passes through an adjustable tube. At the shoulder joint is another pulley wheel which is fastened to the shoulder by a band of webbing or any other convenient means. At this point begins a flexible tube of coiled wire, which enables the cord to adapt itself to every movement of the wearer, and yet to work without much friction. The flexible tube terminates at the knee in a third pulley, attached to the leg by a garter of webbing. The cord now passes through an opening in the seam of the trouser leg to the opposite knee, where through a similar opening projects a hook, over which the loop at the end of the cord is placed." These openings in the dittos are carefully and artfully concealed. "At each knee of the trousers, where the seam is split open, the gaps thus produced is rendered secure again, and free from observation by means of little spring clips" (on the hat rack principle). These keep the gap closed when necessary, and open at a slight pressure from the fingers. Until the sharp sits down to play, the hook lays flat against his leg (it works on a pivot), but the



Stripper Plate and Knife.

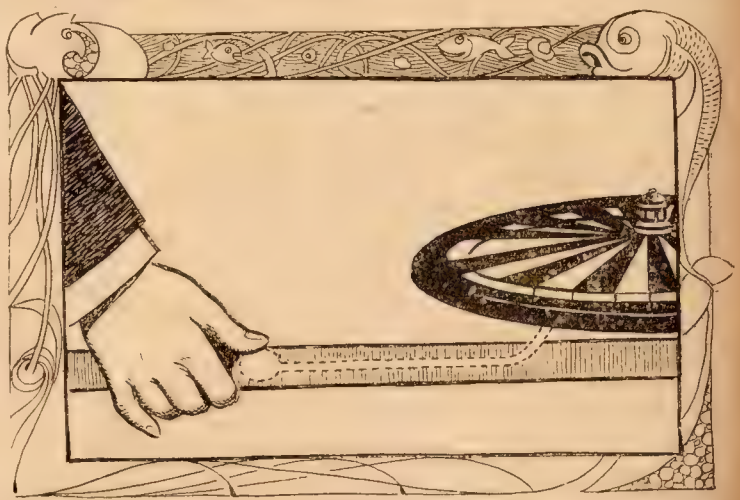
moment he commences a game the cord is drawn through the gap in one trouser leg and attached to the hook. Then all is in readiness, and the sharp has only to open his knees for the cord to be tightened and send the receiver or slide of the hold-out to his hand. When the cards, slightly bent to fit the cuff, are slipped into the receiver, the knees close together, and the slide flies back to its hiding place. When the game ends, all that the cardsharper has to do is to disconnect the cord. The clips in his trousers close tightly, and there is nothing to show that his wonderful hands have been produced by mechanical means. And now that you know the working of the Keplinger hold-out, you ought to be able to guard against its use.

Most of the hold-outs now in use in the States are built on the principle of Keplinger's.

Here are descriptions of two advertised in a maker's catalogue:

LATEST ARM MOVEMENT.

This is a little jewel and is a winner. Cannot be detected, as it fits snugly to the arm and is worked by a slight pressure against side, and does not require any pressure at all after you have become familiar with machine. All it requires is to hold the arm solid against the side and swell the chest, which is all that is necessary



A contrivance to control the ball of a Roulette Table.

to work the machine. Can be worn at all times without inconvenience. Fully guaranteed to do what we claim.

Price, only $25.00

VEST MACHINE.

This is a money producer and will soon win out a Keplinger or Sullivan for you, as it is the best machine for the money ever sold; fits in the vest near the top and requires no unnatural movements to work, is worked by the foot and cannot possibly be detected. Working easily and without noise and with a true "sneak" (this is the fraternity's name for the receiver) that gives and takes perfectly; this is a hard one to go against.

Price, only $15.00

A Keplinger, it may be stated, costs $125, and one can readily gather from the immense difference in the price the vastly superior qualities of this machine over its rivals. The vest machine which we illustrate is in the Black Museum at Scotland Yard.

For dropping selected cards on the top of a pack there is a special "cuff hold-out," which holds cards under the sleeve by two claws. A lever opens the claws, and a tongue causes the cards to fall upon the top of the pack.

As we have already said, hold-outs are useful in all games where the players handle the cards.

In games like banker, however, they are of very little service, and another device is resorted to. In this game professional gamblers use cards known as "strippers," and so that you may know when a pack of this description is being used we will explain the modus operandi. The pack is carefully sorted. All the cards of low denomination are placed in one heap, whilst the "high" cards are placed in another. Then a crude little instrument, consisting of two slightly curved iron bars, connected by screw clamps, is requisitioned. The high cards are placed length-wise between the bars, just a small portion of the sides protruding in the centre. (Our illustration explains the device.) The screws are tightened to their fullest extent, and then a sharp knife or razor cuts away that part of the sides of the cards which projects beyond the iron. The other side is treated in a similar manner. After this the low cards are dealt with, but in this instance the ends only are cut. Thus a sharper using a pack prepared in this way can cut high or low as he pleases. When he has the "bank" he holds the sides and "cuts" half a dozen packs that way, well knowing that he can only grip low cards, the bevelling on the high cards having put them out of his reach. If he can manage it he cuts the pack reserved for himself by holding the ends, and thus ensures getting a high card at the bottom. If the game is one of "cutting" the highest card, it is the same to him.

The Suction Spring "Hold-out."
The Pin "Hold-out."

And now, forsaking cards for the moment (marked cards will be dealt with later), we may turn our attention to a roulette wheel, which, in the language of the maker of the instrument, is "a sure winner for the sharper." The dealer, with a lynx eye on the board, notices the numbers on which the heaviest bets have been made, and as he sends the ball on its journey decides that it shall come to rest in one of the divisions which has been backed for only a small sum or which has not been backed at all. Supposing that a big bet has been made on No. 29. The ball may be about to drop into that space, but instead of settling, will hesitate and pass on. He who made the bet will probably curse his luck. He would be wiser if he blamed his own folly, for it was the pressure of the dealer's finger which caused the ball to continue its round of the wheel. The ball could not enter division 29 because at the critical moment a very fine needle nosed its way through the board and drove it onward. In every division on the board there is a small hole, and the man who is running the wheel can throw the needle through any one of these as he desires. The "sneak" is operated by a pneumatic tube or an electric button, the motive power being a very slight pressure of the fingers.

The Soho Slaughter of 1856

Being an account of the horrible murders perpetrated by one William Bonsfield, in 1856, in the vicinity of Soho, and of the terrible scenes enacted at his execution.

"Your life is forfeit
Unto the law; and you shall surely die,
And shall not live."

—LONGFELLOW, "John Endicott."

HOW long capital punishment will remain with us is difficult to predict, but it seems probable that as civilisation marches on to its predestined end crime will more and more come to be treated as a form of disease, and a policy of mere vengeance will cease to be. The worst use to which a man can be put is to hang him, we have been told, and, though there have been crimes of so fearful a nature as to make any other punishment less than death seem totally inadequate, the trend of the times is to treat the wretched malefactor rather as a monstrosity requiring careful attention and seclusion, than as a mere murderer, to be hurled out of existence as quickly and secretly as possible. Capital punishment for cases of wilful murder is not likely to become extinct for some time yet, but advanced opinion grows more and more against it, and perhaps it would only need a repetition of such scenes as occurred at an execution of which we are about to give an account to make public opinion finally and totally against it. We hang our murderers in as merciful and speedy and painless a way as science permits, but mistakes are sometimes made on the best-regulated scaffolds, and of these—and very terrible they are—the history of crime affords more examples than the admirers of capital punishment would relish if they knew of them. The case we are about to describe is one in point.

In February, 1856, the neighbourhood of Soho—indeed the public generally—was horrified by the report that a man had murdered his wife and three children. The scene of this shocking occurrence was Portland Street, Soho, where, at No. 4, resided a man, a French polisher by trade, named William Bonsfield. This person gave himself up for this quadruple murder to Inspector Dodd, at Bow Street Station, on the morning of Sunday, February 3, and an immense crowd congregated at the Marlborough Police Court the next morning to witness the examination of the self-confessed murderer. The excitement was so considerable that the accused was escorted to that court from Bow Street Police-Station by an enormous body of police, which had no little trouble in protecting him from the indignation of the mob. The court was crowded with people anxious to get a glimpse of this brutal slayer of his own flesh and blood, who proved to be a tall, gaunt man of about 37 years of age. He was of shabby and dissipated appearance and seemed to be quite oblivious to his situation and its consequences, and maintained a gloomy silence and sullen demeanour throughout the proceedings. It appeared by the evidence of the prisoner's father-in-law that his daughter was 28 years of age, and that she and Bonsfield had lived on very good terms, although the latter was a very idle fellow, passing three parts of his time in doing nothing. Occa-

sionally he figured as a "super" at one or other of the theatres, for which he received the usual shilling or one-and-sixpence per night, but his wife, on the other hand, was sturdy and industrious, and looked after a small shop, in which she sold sweets, stationery, newspapers and tobacco. She had been put into this small business by her father, who had also defrayed the rent, doctor's bill, and most of the other expenses of Bonsfield's family. The father resided under the same roof, but, strange to say, was quite in ignorance of the awful happening in the house until informed by the police. On the birth of the third child it would appear that words had passed between the prisoner and his wife on account of the former making no apparent effort to secure any regular employment. The father had last seen them together on the morning of Saturday, February 2, and then they had seemed to be on fairly good terms, nor did he hear of any further dispute taking place during the day. A woman who lodged at the same house went at half-past twelve on Saturday night to the parlour in which the whole family slept to ask for some firewood, which Mrs. Bonsfield was in the habit of selling, and the latter, in reply to her knock, said in a cheerful voice that they were all in bed. However, she asked her husband to get up and take some wood to the woman, but he appeared to refuse in a surly manner, and Mrs. Bonsfield then said that she would be up early, and would leave the wood before six in the morning at the witness's door. This was the last known or heard of the unfortunate family, and the sequel is best stated by the other witnesses. A police-constable named Fudge said that at seven o'clock on the Sunday morning he was on duty at Bow Street, standing in the passage, when the prisoner came in. He asked him where he thought he was going to, and Bonsfield replied, "I have come to give myself up for murdering my wife." In reply to a question as to where the murder was committed he said, "At No. 4, Portland Street," and he was then taken before the inspector, who ordered him to be searched. The inspector in question declared that on being brought before him the prisoner said, "I have killed my wife," and added that she was in the back parlour of the house in question, lying quite dead. When searched, a wound on his neck, covered with blood, was found, and another wound on his wrist, and these cuts were at once attended to by the divisional surgeon. A latch-key was found on the prisoner, and the inspector took that with him in a cab to the address given, and entered the house. He was obliged to break open the door of the back parlour, and there he found lying on a French bedstead the dead body of the woman, with her head on the left side, and a large cut under her right ear, covered with blood. He also found lying on the same bed the dead body of a child, named Eliza Bonsfield, about four years of age, whose head was towards the foot of the bed, with her right knee close to the body of the woman. On the other side was lying the dead body of a male child, not more than eight months old, and there was a severe wound on the child's neck. Also in this room was a press, and in this press the inspector made a fresh and fearful discovery. He found a dead body of a child—a female—about six years old, and this one was covered with blood, still flowing from a frightful gash in the neck. The instruments with which these lives had been thus wantonly returned to their Maker were speedily discovered, a five-eighths chisel, covered with blood, being found on the pillow of the French bedstead near the body of the woman, and under her shoulder was the handle of a razor, smeared with blood. Under the body of the male child was found the blade of a razor, covered with blood, and between the dead bodies was a piece of leather. The bed and bed-clothes were saturated with gore, and a great quantity of clotted blood was on the floor by the bedside, some of it having even run into the shop through a glass door. There was also blood on a key in the shop-door and stains of the same fluid were on the door and the doorposts, as if some person had gone out with their hands covered in blood, the stains being quite fresh and wet when the inspector first entered the room. Blood was also found on a slate-book on the counter, and the whole place resembled a shambles. Inspector Dodd secured the place, took away the keys, and drove rapidly back to Bow Street, when he again saw the prisoner, and told him that he stood charged with the murder of his wife and three children. The prisoner merely replied, "That is all right." Mr. Hadaway, a surgeon, was, in the meanwhile, sent to the dwelling by the police, and he examined the bodies of the victims of this tragedy, all of whom were quite dead. It appeared that the woman had an incision in her neck—a clean cut wound—from three to four inches in length, and there were also three cuts on the right arm and four on the left. These had evidently been done to open the veins, but very little blood had flowed from them, and she had died from the effects of the much graver injury to the neck. The doctor said that he found two children on the bed, quite lifeless. He then turned to a press-bedstead that was in the room, and saw another child lying in it quite dead, with two incisions on the right side of the neck. The nature of the various injuries was as follows: Eliza Bonsfield, the younger child, had two large cuts in the right part of the neck, and had died from shock and loss of blood. The elder child had two very similar wounds, but less deep, while John William Bonsfield, the infant, had two incisions on the right side of the neck, and one on the lower part of the left ear, which had penetrated into the flesh and bone behind. Most of the injuries had been done with the chisel, but injuries had also been inflicted with a sharp knife or a razor. The bodies were quite cold, and the medical gentleman was of opinion that they had been dead some hours. Subsequently a post-mortem examination was made of the body of Mrs. Bonsfield. There was found a punctured wound on the left cheek and penetrating right through the cheek, while there was a lacerated wound on the lower lip.

Gave himself up at Bow Street.

The wound in the neck had been done with a very sharp instrument, and had divided the skin integuments and all the soft parts. The carotid artery was all but divided. There was also a small wound above the larger one, about an inch in length, and over the front of the left shoulder was a clean-cut wound about an inch long. There was a cut through the nightdress corresponding with the wound. On the left elbow were two other punctures, and also one at the back of the bend of the elbow. They were all superficial. On examining the right arm, about two inches above the bend of the elbow, inside, there was another punctured wound, also superficial, but there were no marks of wounds on the hands, and no appearance of any struggle. The heart and the other viscera were healthy, and the only cause of death was the partial division of the carotid artery, done, in all probability, when the woman was asleep. While the murderer had thus been firm-nerved enough when inflicting the death-wounds upon his victims, it was far otherwise when he turned his hand against himself, for the wound on his own throat was only an inch long, and had only slightly severed the skin. The prisoner, when he came to the police-station did not smell of drink, nor did he present any of the appearances of intoxication, but he seemed greatly agitated and shook very much. The woman who lodged above the Bonsfields was able to supply something that might pass as a motive for these diabolical crimes. Mrs. Bonsfield was ten years younger than her husband, rather

good-looking, with a lively disposition, while her husband was always a morose and despondent sort of being, who rather resented his wife's good humour and contented mind. In fact, the man was jealous, and he had been heard to say that he did not like the young men who came to the shop, and with whom, as with her other customers, Mrs. Bonsfield would occasionally exchange a few words of civility. He had been heard to say that he thought his wife was too free with them, and he had noticed that many people who would come to the shop if she was there kept away if he was serving behind the counter. They did not sleep together after the birth of the last child, Bonsfield himself occupying the press-bedstead, with one of their children.

On the Friday night previous to the murders he had returned home very suddenly from the theatre at which he had found casual employment, and he appeared to think that he might "catch" his wife in the act of flirting or encouraging some male customers by this stratagem; but it does not appear that he was jealous of one particular man. Indeed, his jealousy was altogether baseless, for it was the general opinion of all who came in contact with her that Mrs. Bonsfield was a faithful wife, with all her lively ways, and an exemplary mother. William Bonsfield was tried at the Central Criminal Court in March, and the proceedings were necessarily very brief, and without incident. Apart from evidence which pointed almost as conclusively to the guilt of the prisoner as that of an eye-witness could have done, there was the surrender at the police station and the confession—not retracted since—to be explained away by the counsel for the defence. No attempt was made to deny or question the actual guilt of the unhappy husband and father, who glared morosely round the crowded court, and eyed the judge so curiously. His counsel wisely did not seek to rebut the evidence, but he pointed out that the motive, if any existed even in the morbid and diseased mind of the prisoner, was so slight and trifling that it did not appear possible that the latter could have committed these crimes because of it if he were of sane mind. He suggested that Bonsfield had rather been attacked by some sudden frenzy, and that the jury might, in mercy, hold him to be not responsible for his actions at the time the deeds were done. There was an utter absence of premeditation, as well as of motive, and the whole conduct of the prisoner suggested that he did not realise then—and possibly did not even realise now—what he had done in his frenzied madness.

The judge rather modified the effect of this appeal to the jury by pointing out that no one had come forward to suggest that there was any insanity in the prisoner's family, and that his conduct was not that of a man who was mad. The murders were not the result of a quarrel between husband and wife, for the latter had evidently been killed whilst asleep, and the prisoner had done his fell work with nerve and determination.

The jury did not even retire, but immediately found the prisoner guilty, and the judge, in sentencing him to be hanged, told him that there was only one quarter from which he could hope or expect any mercy, and that mercy was not of this world. The murderer listened to the judge's solemn pronouncement without visible emotion, and walked quickly from the dock when all was over.

We now reach the sensational and shocking part of a fearful tragedy indeed. A very appalling scene was witnessed at the execution of this miserable man, one from which the mind revolts and even the mind's eye recoils. After his condemnation, his behaviour was sullen and taciturn, and he met the exhortations of the chaplain with dogged silence, seeming to wish to impress the officers with the idea that his mind was disordered, and he even made a sham attempt at self-destruction by throwing himself on to the fire which he had been permitted to have in his cell. He was only very slightly injured in this attempt, and he did not venture on anything of the sort again, for the vigilance of his guards was unrelaxing afterwards, and the experienced officials could not be deceived. They had no doubt but that he was perfectly sane, but he still attempted to prove himself otherwise, for he could not be prevailed upon to give any serious attention to the ministrations of the chaplain, nor to take food without coercion. This sullen line of conduct he continued to the last, making little or no reference to the crimes for which he was to suffer. The execution took place in the early days of April, a fine spring morning, and one not easily forgotten, no doubt, by those who, by reason of business or of inclination—heaven save the mark!—were present at the scene of expiation.

THE INSPECTOR DISCOVERS THE DEAD BODIES.

When Calcraft entered the cell, the condemned man gave a great shudder, and for the first time appeared to realise the fearful ordeal before him. When pinioned by that celebrity amongst hangmen, he assumed the appearance of utter prostration, which, possibly, was not altogether artificial or unnatural, for want of sufficient nourishment and sleep, and much sullen suffering, had no doubt greatly impaired his physical resources. He seemed to completely collapse, mentally and physically, and, when the fatal moment arrived, he had to be raised by four gaolers and by them literally carried or dragged to the scaffold. When placed under the beam, he appeared to be so utterly bereft of effort and devoid of power as to be unable to stand, and he was seated in a chair on the scaffold, and in that position the halter was adjusted round his neck. This arrangement gave opportunity for the dreadful scene that ensued. There was an enormous concourse of people assembled to witness the execution, for peace had just been declared with Russia. The horrors of the campaign in the Crimea were things of the past, and the whole of London was in a holiday humour. Even as recently as the middle of last century executions were as much public spectacles as a "Brighton walk" or a "Lord Mayor's show," and many hundreds were gathered together to see this man "die in his shoes." To return to the scene on the scaffold. There sat, or, rather, lay, Bonsfield, half-stretched across the chair, and with the fatal rope about his neck. The sitting position of the convict extended the rope so far as not to allow of that fall in which the efficacy of this mode of execution consists, and, consequently, when the platform fell from beneath him, death or insensibility did not take place.

Scarcely had the dull, heavy sound of the falling drop been heard, when a horrified exclamation issued from the vast concourse of people assembled around the scaffold and immediately below it. "He is up again!" yelled hundreds of voices, and it was true. To the horror of the spectators, it was seen that the miserable man had made a desperate and most extraordinary muscular effort, by which he had raised his lower limbs to the level of the drop, and that both his feet were actually resting on the ledge, and that he was making tremendous efforts to raise his pinioned arms to the rope. One can imagine the dread scene—one, indeed, to shudder at, not to see. One of the officials instantly rushed upon the scaffold and pushed the wretched man's feet from their resting-place, but that did not suffice to end his struggles, for in one instant, by another marvellous effort, he threw himself towards the other side, and actually again succeeded in getting his feet—both of them—on the edge of the drop. Calcraft, who had left the scaffold, but had been sent for, now returned, and forced his feet from the scaffold, so that he hung suspended, but the dreadful scene was not yet over. The brief relief and respite the criminal had obtained by these extraordinary means had certainly given him the opportunity to inhale fresh air into his lungs, and to breathe again, and to the horror and astonishment of the beholders—many of whom were violently sick or fainted—he again, and for the third time, succeeded in securing his feet upon the edge of the scaffold. Calcraft and his assistants once again pulled off his feet from their rest, and this time the executioner—himself in a dreadful state of mind—leapt down into the pit and held the wretch from further exertion until all struggles had ceased. Even then he died hardly, and the rope moved and vibrated strangely for some moments before all was still. During the time this gruesome scene was enacting, the horrified shrieks, yells, and hissings of the people who surrounded the scaffold made the occurrence yet more appalling. Nor did it at all serve to diminish the ghastly terror of all the circumstances while the murderer was expiating his deeds in this horrible way, the steeples of the neighbouring churches were pouring forth merry peals on the announcement of peace with the great Power whose might had defied ours and that of France, Turkey, and Sardinia for so long.

Public opinion was much excited and aroused by the terrifying details of this execution. The Press occupied itself with pointing a moral as well as adorning a tale, and the opponents of the system of capital punishment—a few existed even then—were up in arms at once, and demanded its immediate abolition. Others pronounced themselves in favour of the guillotine system of our late allies, which could not err or cause any painful delay in effecting the death of any malefactor. An inquiry took place into all the circumstances attending the execution of Bonsfield, but no one person could be blamed, and little came of it. It is not recorded, however, that any murderer was again hanged while seated in a chair, no matter how prostrate his condition, and though we have had other painful bunglings at executions, nothing so appalling has since been witnessed as the execution we have endeavoured to describe.

CONVICTED ON A GHOST'S EVIDENCE.

How the Apparition of Anne Walker revealed her murder and the place in which her body had been hidden.

"The times have been
That when the brains were out, the man would die
And there an end; but now they rise again
With twenty mortal murders on their crowns
And push us from our stools."

—SHAKESPEARE, "Macbeth," Act. III., Scene 4.

IN the heart of the coal-fields, about six miles from Durham, on the old Roman road, between that city and Newcastle-upon-Tyne, pleasantly and picturesquely situated, has stood for some hundreds of years the little town of Chester-le-Street. In the old coaching and posting days, lying as it did on the great North road from London to Edinburgh, it saw plenty of life and locomotion, which brought money to its old inns, and even in these changed times its position as a mining centre invests it with a certain importance.

Two miles from Chester-le-Street is the village of Great Lumley, with its Castle, the seat of the ancient family of that name. Here, in the year 1632, lived a yeoman of good estate, named John Walker. He was a widower, without children, and his house was kept by a young kinswoman, Anne Walker. She was a comely and attractive woman, and the neighbours strongly suspected that the relations between the two were not of a strictly platonic character. The sharp-eyed female gossips of the village kept a keen eye upon her, and their suspicions were confirmed when it became obvious to matrons interested in such matters that Anne Walker was in that condition in which "ladies wish to be who love their lords." Only, of course, in this case Anne Walker, having no lawful "lord," had no business to be in that condition. By-and-by, Anne's secret could no longer be concealed, and she was taken by her relation to an aunt of hers, Dame Carr, of Chester-le-Street, where she might get rid of her burden without having to face the prying eyes of the gossips of Lumley. John Walker did not admit that he was the cause of Anne's impending shame, but left Dame Carr to imagine that the girl had got into trouble with some youthful lover, and that her kinsman, out of kindly feeling for her, wished, as far as possible, to hide her disgrace. Her aunt pressed her constantly to disclose the name of the father of the child of which she expected shortly to be delivered, but Anne steadily refused to reveal it. But at last, as the time of her confinement drew near, she confessed to her aunt that her kinsman, John Walker, was the father of the child, and that he told her not to trouble herself about it, as he would take care both of her and the infant.

A day or two after this confession, an intimate friend of John Walker's, one Mark Sharp, a collier from Blackburn, called about dusk and asked to see Anne. He had a short conversation in private with the girl, who then left the house with him, and never returned. Dame Carr was surprised and uneasy at the prolonged absence of her niece, as day after day passed and brought no tidings of her. So she

made up her mind to see John Walker on the subject. He assured her that all was right, that he had sent Anne off to a secluded place, where no one knew her, and where she was to stay until after her confinement, as he thought it better that she should, to use her own words, "get rid of her burden" among strangers and so preserve her character. Dame Carr thought that if this was to be done at all it should have been done long before, seeing that her niece's condition had already become the subject of scandal and gossip in Lumley.

So Anne Walker disappeared, and the only persons who knew of her whereabouts were her kinsman, John Walker, and his "sworn brother," Mark Sharp, the collier. Dame Carr, however, began to have her suspicions that John Walker had not told her the truth about the disappearance of her niece, and, meeting a gossip from Lumley, was startled to find that the prevailing opinion there was that Anne had met with foul play. Still, as there was nothing but vague suspicion in support of the theory that a crime had been committed, it was difficult to see what steps could be taken to bring John Walker to book. He held a respectable position, he had never been known to do anything wrong, and why should he put his neck in peril on account of a chit of a girl whom he had seduced? Probably, Anne Walker's disappearance would have gone the way of all nine days' wonders—would have been forgotten, and the suspicions against John Walker would have faded into nothingness, with the lapse of time, but for a very sensational and extraordinary event.

"I AM THE SPIRIT OF ANNE WALKER."

About a fortnight after the disappearance of Anne Walker, James Graham, a miller, who lived a couple of miles away from John Walker's house, was alone in his mill at the dead of night—grinding corn. Between twelve and one o'clock he came down the stairs after putting corn in the hopper, when his eyes fell upon a sight which was well calculated to produce upon him the effect described by the ghost of Hamlet's father:

"Harrow up his soul, freeze his young blood,
Make his two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres,
His knotted and combined locks to part,
And each particular hair to stand on end,
Like quills upon the fretful porcupine."

But what James Graham saw had best be described in his own words, preserved to us in his original deposition, which may be seen to this day in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. "The mill doors being shut, there stood a woman upon the midst of the floor, with her hair about her head hanging down and all bloody, with five large wounds on her head. He, being much affrighted and amazed, began to bless himself, and at last asked her who she was and what she wanted? To which she said, 'I am the spirit of Anne Walker, who lived with John Walker, and being got with child by him, he promised to send me to a private place, where I should be well looked to till I was brought to bed and well again, and then I should come again and keep his house. And accordingly,' said the apparition, 'I was one night, late, sent away with one Mark Sharp, who upon a moor (naming a place that the miller knew) slew me with a pick, such as men dig coal with, and gave me these five wounds, and after threw my body into a coal pit hard by, and hid the pick under a bank, and his shoes and stockings being bloody, he endeavoured to wash 'em, but seeing the blood would not part, he hid them there.' And the apparition further told the miller that he must be the man to reveal it, or else that she must still appear and haunt him."

The spectacle of such an apparition, seen at that "witching hour of night, when churchyards yawn and graves give up their dead," was enough to appal the stoutest heart, and it is not surprising, therefore, to learn that the miller, to use his own words, "retired into his house very sad and heavy." He spoke no word of what he had seen, however, to a living soul, but he carefully avoided being alone again in the mill after dark, thinking that, in this way, he might escape a second visit from the apparition, which would scarcely venture to confront him when he was in company with others. But, notwithstanding all his precautions, he found himself one evening alone just after dark, and immediately the apparition confronted him, "very fierce and cruel," and threatened that if he did not reveal the murder, she would continually pursue and haunt him. Graham was frightened—he admits this—but for all that he felt no inclination to obey the ghost's injunction, and so he still kept silence and made no sign, only taking care never by any chance to be alone

after dark. But his ghostly visitant never ceased to dog his steps and watch for its opportunity. It bided its time, and the time soon came. On St. Thomas's Eve, the 20th of December, as the miller was walking after sunset in his garden, the ghostly woman appeared again before him, with more terrific aspect than ever, "and she so threatened and affrighted him that he did faithfully promise to reveal the murder the next morning."

By this time James Graham had discovered that ghosts are not to be trifled with, and dreading another visitation unless he fulfilled his promise, he went straight off to a magistrate the next day and unbosomed himself of the secret. In those days the belief in the supernatural was widely spread in all classes. Not forty years before the King himself had written a book on "Dæmonologie," full of so-called authenticated cases of devil-possession and witchcraft; and consequently the magistrate listened to James Graham's strange story without incredulity. The miller's tale was so circumstantial, and the three repeated appearances of the ghost gave such an air of probability to its mysterious revelation, that the magistrate resolved at once to test the truth of the apparition's version of the murder. Diligent search was instituted on the spot indicated by the ghost, with the startling result that the body of the murdered girl, bearing the marks of five terrible wounds, was found in a deserted coal pit, whilst not far distant were discovered the pick and the blood-stained shoes and stockings, precisely as described by the apparition. These were indeed "confirmations strong as proofs of Holy Writ," and on the strength of them John Walker and Mark Sharp were arrested and charged with the murder. Both stoutly denied any knowledge of or complicity in the crime, but as there was such strong circumstantial evidence against them, they were committed for trial at the next Durham Assizes.

The case was tried before Mr. Justice Davenport, and created extraordinary excitement in the district. Both the accused pleaded "Not Guilty." Of course, the witness whose evidence caused most sensation was John Graham, the miller, who solemnly swore to the truth of every word which he had uttered before the magistrate respecting the three visits of the ghost to him. He was personally unknown, except by sight, either to John Walker or Mark Sharp, and it was never suggested by either of the prisoners that Graham could have any possible motive in thus formulating a charge of murder against them, nor was any other way suggested in which the miller could have discovered the body of the murdered woman except through the revelation of the ghost.

Of course it might have been suggested that Graham had himself committed the murder. But then it was not shown that he was ever acquainted with Anne Walker, and there was the girl's confession to Dame Carr that John Walker was the father of her child to dispose effectually of any insinuation that Graham might have been the author of her shame. It was obvious that in the case of John Walker there was a sufficient motive for getting rid of the girl whom he had seduced, and no doubt he had made it well worth the while of his "sworn brother," Mark Sharp, to assist him in the crime.

Moreover, there was other supernatural evidence to connect John Walker with the murder. The foreman of the jury, Mr. Fairbairn, solemnly swore afterwards by affidavit that during the trial he saw the "likeness of a child standing upon Walker's shoulder." And the judge himself, in a long letter which he subsequently wrote to his learned friend, Mr. Serjeant Hutton, of Goldsborough, with full particulars of the trial, admitted that he himself fancied he saw something like the figure described by Mr. Fairbairn, and all through the case experienced a strange, weird, creepy, uncanny feeling, for which he could in no way account. It is not surprising, therefore, that with the air so pregnant with superstitious terrors the jury should, without hesitation, have found a verdict of "Guilty" against both prisoners. It was noticed as a remarkable and significant fact that the judge "was very much troubled, and gave sentence that night the trial was, which was a thing never used in Durham before or after." The condemned prisoners were in due course hanged, but it is not on record that either of them confessed to the crime before his death.

The facts as we have above narrated them are vouched for by most respectable witnesses—viz., Mr. Justice Davenport himself, Mr. James Smart, of Chester-le-Street, Mr. William Lumley, of Great Lumley, and Mr. Shepherdson, of the same place, whilst the official deposition of James Graham, from which we have quoted, is, as we have already stated, preserved in the Bodleian Library. There can be no doubt whatever that the murder would never have been discovered but for James Graham's revelations, and there can be just as little doubt that both judge and jury implicitly believed his story of the apparition. Here, then, we have a case in which two men were convicted and hanged on the evidence of a ghost. Dr. John Webster, in his work on "Witchcraft and the Supernatural," thus comments upon the case: "This I confess to be one of the most convincing stories, being of undoubted verity, that I ever read, heard, or knew of, and carrieth with it the most evident force to make the most incredulous spirit to be satisfied that there are really sometimes such things as apparitions." We shall not attempt to pass any opinion ourselves upon the truth or otherwise of the alleged apparition; we will only add that in a future article we shall give a still more startling narrative of the appearance of a ghost as a witness in a court of justice.

Criminal Problems

MODERATE-SIZED OFFENCES.

THERE is a famous work dealing with the "Sinfulness of Little Sins." A great London daily, during the big gooseberry season of 1903, opened its columns to a correspondence on the subject, "Do Tradesmen Cheat?" Nobody can call cheating a little sin; it is something much worse than a peccadillo. But we must not attempt to draw the line, to say definitely at what point a little sin becomes a big sin. The Greek philosopher, Chrysippus, used to take a heap of corn and say, "Is this a big heap?" If the answer were "Yes," he would take away one grain, ask the same question, take away another grain, and so on, and so on, until somebody was tired. Of course it is as bad to forge a man's initials as to forge his signature. But does anybody believe that a conviction ever could have been obtained in the following case? "A" owed "B" some money, and "B" wanted it. "A" was very short at the time, but told "B" that if he would accept a post-dated cheque, he would give it him. "B" agrees, takes the post-dated cheque, but returns very soon, saying, "You have left out one of my initials. Do you mind inserting it, and initialling the alteration?" "A" does as requested. But imagine his disgust to find that "B" has altered the date on his cheque, and cashed it. The palaver about altering the name of the payee was simply a ruse to enable "B" to see how "A" initialled an alteration. If the case had gone into court there might have been expert evidence to say that the handwriting of the two initiallings differed; indeed, the ink may not have been the same in the two cases. It was a piece of cunning. And "cunning is often present in the lowest types of intelligence" is a remark by a superintendent of Indian prisons which is rather quaintly quoted in a treatise on "Whist"—of all places in the world. The author rather deprecates "Underplay" and foxiness of any description.

Long firm stories are countless. The present writer was told of a man who managed to make £1,600 out of nothing. He did not keep it long. As the French say, what comes from the flute goes away with the drum. This individual had tons and tons of potatoes sent him to sell on commission. He sent cheques in payment for them. But there was always some hitch. Either the date was wrong, or the cheque was unsigned, or something. As soon as the cheque was posted, there would be a telegram sent, "Am afraid I forgot to sign your cheque for £316 14s. 8d. Please return it, and another will be sent forthwith. Keep on sending potatoes. A fog in the Channel, and there looks like being very short supply." The cheques were always met eventually, but there was everlastingly the delay of a few days. And with the turnover of his customers' money just for these stray broken periods, the "honest broker" managed to pay rent, rates, wages, and all other expenses, and to be a sixteen-hundred-pound man after one season's trading. He then began to speculate, and lost it all. Now, as the law is at present, if a seller accepts any money on account, the sale holds good. This is a true story. An East of England farmer sold 150 tons of potatoes at £3 a ton. "What can you let me have to bind a bargain?" "Well, will £10 do? No? Well, £20. Will that do?" "All right." "Well, send two trucks every other day."

The farmer made inquiries, but the men he inquired of turned out to be confederates of the long firm man. He accepted the £20 down, and agreed to send two trucks every other day. When this had been going on for a few days, he wired up, "Why don't you send me some money?" The reply was, "Keep on sending the potatoes. I will pay you when you have delivered them all. If you don't consign the potatoes regularly I shall sue you for damages." The poor farmer thought, "Well, he has got my potatoes so far; if I don't carry out my part of the contract, I feel sure I shan't get paid for what I have already let him have. And I believe he can sue me for breach of contract if I don't keep on sending the potatoes. I expect the best thing I can do is to let him have them." And he did. But not one penny piece did he ever receive over and above the £20 he took on account. Another farmer sold sixteen bullocks to a long firm man at Colchester Market. He was given a cheque, but was taken into a public-house and kept drinking until the bank's shutters were up. Next market day at Chelmsford those same bullocks were sold for ready money, and the poor farmer never received a halfpenny. We hear of people finding out that they have consigned goods to a "wrong 'un," and following those goods down to the consignee's address. A little bit of "palm oil" has been placed in the hands of the railway men, and the delivery of the goods has been prevented, but prevented in an illegal manner. That's an example of a "moderate-sized offence against the law."

There is a London proverb, "They are all good men in the Meat Market." And so they are, every one of them. But they are very fond of making jokes at the expense of their own honesty. A master and his man, George, will be talking to a customer. The master will say to the customer, "No, lady; we don't sell fourteen pounds of meat to the stone. That's live weight. Here, George; tell the lady how many pounds of meat go to the stone?" "Eight pounds, master." "Eight pounds of meat to the stone, you've been selling? No wonder I lose money!" "But 'eight pounds' is right, master!" "No, it ain't, fat head! A stone of beef is seven pounds and a quarter and a bit of fat! And don't you forget it!" We don't say that good butchers act on that principle. And, of course, that party at Smithfield was only joking. But—well, we had better not say any more.

Leaves from Our Notebook.

The Fair Stranger.

In the summer of 1849 a young officer in Her Majesty's Army—who shall be nameless—paid a flying visit to some friends at Edinburgh.

One fine morning he was out for a stroll on the fine hills surrounding the Scotch capital, and encountered a very handsome and well-dressed lady, who seemed by no means embarrassed by his glances of admiration. The son of Mars and the daughter of Venus entered into conversation, and the lady ultimately asked the flattered officer to sup with her that night at her hotel. He eagerly availed himself of the invitation, and enjoyed a very pleasant evening with the fair stranger.

Some three months later he was at an important trial for murder at the Old Bailey. A man and his wife were being tried for the crime. There in the dock stood his inamorata of the northern capital!

Answers to Correspondents

The Editor will be pleased to answer any suitable questions.

BUSHMAN.—The celebrated Kellys flourised from 1873 to 1880.

N. W. JONES.—Both crimes you mention will appear in due course.

RIPON (Blackburn).—The murder of Mrs. Waine is now in the press.

C. W. R.—The latest case of phosphorus being used for murder was in 1899, when Mary Ansell poisoned her sister.

OLD BAILEY GALLOWS.—1. Catnach was the great publisher of "Broadsides." They are now very rare. 2. Yes. James Berry published a book. It is now out of print.

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Absolutely cured in few days by a harmless and certain method. To prove this "try before you buy," sending two penny stamps to cover postage, &c., of a free sample. Cure registered by Government.—C. TAYLOR & Co., 149, Fleet Street, London.

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I will send absolutely **free** to all who enclose two penny stamps to cover postage, &c., with testimonials and medical certificate, a sample of the most wonderful preparation ever discovered for the natural development of the bust, and by the use of which may be regained a perfect figure, full and lovely. Absolutely harmless, never fails, permanent in its effect. Address in confidence, MRS. H. NEVILLE, 9, Newington Causeway, London, S.E.

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SUPERFLUOUS HAIRS.—How many ladies with a strong growth of hair upon some prominent part of her features has not cried out from the depths and bitterness of despair, "Is there no relief for this vile intrusion? Must I live on and on and each day develop more and more into a human monstrosity! Must this deformity become still more unsightly, this burden more oppressive?" The answer heretofore given to this appeal has been far from satisfactory, yet we must all admit that we live in an age of new and wonderful inventions, and one of these I claim. To prove this, send in confidence, a stamped addressed envelope, and I will tell you what it is.—Address, MRS. NEVILLE, 9, Newington Causeway, London.

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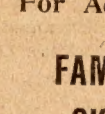
HOW LOST, HOW REGAINED.



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"A DOCTOR EXAMINED ME."

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